



Price of a barrel of petroleum
US\$ 67.16
↑1.76

INSIDE TODAY
WORLD NEWS
TOUGH LOVE



Visiting U.S. Vice President Joe Biden speaks at the Georgian parliament in Tbilisi, Thursday, July 23, 2009. In a speech interrupted several times by standing ovations, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden told somber Georgian officials Thursday that Washington stands behind them a year after their army was routed in a war with neighboring Russia.

See International News on Page B7

SPORTS NEWS
PERFECT MARK



Chicago White Sox pitcher Mark Buehrle, left, is embraced by teammate Josh Fields after tossing a perfect game against the Tampa Bay Rays in a baseball game, Thursday, July 23, 2009, in Chicago. The White Sox won 5-0.

See Sports Today on Page B11

Princess Margriet to open the “Koninkrijksspelen Aruba 2009”

Kingdom Games to open with spectacular show



ORANJESTAD - Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and Pieter van Vollenhoven will attend the opening program of the Kingdom Games on Saturday, July 25th, 2009. Every two years, the Kingdom of the Netherlands consisting of Aruba, Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, celebrates Kingdom Games with the goals of:

Stimulating Sports Development in the broadest sense of the word on Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles with the youth as the main target.

Developing mutual understanding between youngsters of the Netherlands Antilles, Aruba, and the Netherlands that ought to serve as the basis for mutual respect and togetherness.

The Kingdom Games is taking place from July 21 to the 27th, 2009. The theme is “Power.”

The Cultural component to the Kingdom Games was introduced for the first time in July of 2007 alongside the traditional Kingdom Games that focused primarily on Sports.



The first ever Kingdom Games were held in 1965. It was a try to bring the several parts of the Kingdom closer together. In these days these parts were the Netherlands, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles. In 1975 Suriname became un-dependant and did no longer take part in the Games.

Continued on Next Page





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Kingdom Games to open with spectacular show



Continued from Front Page

Between 1979 and 1983 the Games were only held between the Netherlands and the Antilles, and after that they were cancelled.. In 1995 the Games were re-founded by former swimmer and politician Erica Terpstra to bring the youth of the separate countries closer to each other.

The strength of the team of the Netherlands is always changed in order to the strength of the other teams, because normally the level of the Dutch team is much higher compared to the other participants. The Dutch normally participate with regional teams or younger sportspeople to close the gap in quality. □



A special treat from 'de Zeeuwse kust'

Papillon Restaurant is featuring Dutch mussels this weekend

THE VILLAGE - A special treat is on the menu of Papillon Restaurant this coming weekend: Dutch mussels, flown in by ArkeFly, and with the fresh, salty smell of one of Holland's best export products still clinging to them. Mid July is the time when the tastiest, best mussels are cut in the south of Holland, at 'de Zeeuwse kust' and Papillon is gearing up for a true mussel feast.

Papillon's chef will be preparing the mussels in two ways: the traditional and the local way. The classic, traditional way is with all the trimmings: boiled and steeped in French white wine with a garnish of fresh vegetables like finely cut onions, celery, parsley and black, freshly ground pepper and thyme.



These traditional mussels are served with French bread, a salad and a choice of potatoes: French fries or new potatoes. The other way is the 'manera local': with Aruba's locally brewed Balashi beer, funchi instead of French bread and a choice of potatoes and a salad. Funchi is a local staple food.

Mussels are really healthy: they contain hardly any cholesterol at all, are rich in vitamins and good fatty acids. The 'Zeeuwse Mosselen' are world famous: they are tasty and chewy, mmmm. Papillon Restaurant is in The Village, across from the Radisson Resort. □



International Dance Workshop to be held in August



ORANJESTAD-In August the highest caliber of professional dancers in ballet and modern dance will come to Aruba to give workshop classes at the Cas di Cultura. The workshop, which is open to all dancers; students through professional, is a unique opportunity for dancers on the island to be exposed to top professionals from NYC in ballet and modern dance.

The format of the workshop will be three days of classes given by the guest artists and a performance on the fourth day which will give all participants the opportunity to share the stage with the guest artists as well as display what they have learned through out the three days. The workshop is open to all dance students and professionals ages 10 to adult, of an intermediate/advanced

level.

The guest artists and performers from New York include, Leonid Kozlov, former principal dancer with the Bolshoi Ballet, Russia, New York City Ballet, and Broadway. Mr. Kozlov will be giving a classical ballet workshop which combines the fluid Russian style with the light and quick Balanchine style. Mr. Kozlov has brought several productions to the island over the past two years, including the full length Nutcracker and Swan Lake. Instructing the modern dance workshop is Christine Dakin, former artistic director and principal dancer of the Martha Graham Dance Company. Ms. Dakin is in high demand as a Graham technique instructor, having worked extensively with Martha Graham. She has taught through out the world, most recently in at Danzfest in Italy, Harvard University and Juilliard, USA, and in Mexico where she is creating and filming an international collaboration of dancers and musicians—La Voz del Cuerpo/The Body Speaks. Helen Hansen, a principal dancer and rehearsal assistant for Buglisi Dance Theatre, will be giving a repertory workshop. Ms. Hansen is also on the Juilliard Dance Division faculty teaching the Alexander Technique.

The repertory workshop will expose students to the works of today's modern dance choreographers of New York. Patrick Daugherty, pianist

and composer, will provide musical accompaniment for the workshop classes and performance.

The workshop will be held, Wednesday, August 26th through Saturday, August 29th from 3:00pm-6:00pm at the Cas di Cultura. The workshop performance in which all the guest artists and participants will perform will be held on Saturday, August 29th at 8:00pm at the Cas di Cultura. The fee for the workshop (9 classes/rehearsal/performance) is 120 florins. Participants may register before the start of the workshop on Wednesday, August 26th from 2:30pm-3:00pm at the Cas di Cultura or in advance by dropping off your form at the Club di Movimiento (Bubali 76-B). For more information and a registration form visit www.dancearuba.com or call 587-3413. □





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<p>Dessert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chocolate or Banana Cake • Ice Cream • Coffee / Tea 	<p>3-course dinner \$24 per person</p>

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Ed Hardy Models visit The Underground Aruba



ORANJESTAD — The international models from Ed Hardy visited the Underground Aruba on Wednesday evening after just arriving on the island of Aruba. They were escorted



by a group of Aruban professionals in a limo hummer. The beautiful young ladies enjoyed their tour of the shop and the conversations with new friends. The Underground

specializes in rock-a-Billy, punk and rocker-chic style clothes and accessories. The clothes are exclusive and eccentric. They research the hack out of the industry to get clothes. □



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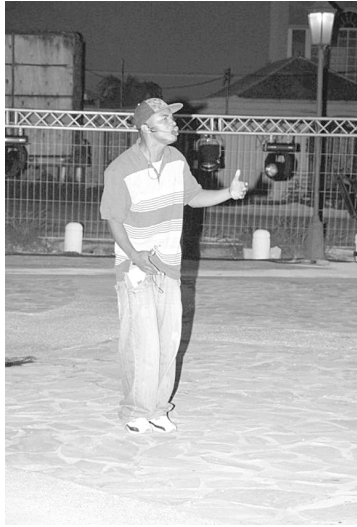
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Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet to inaugurate archeological museum

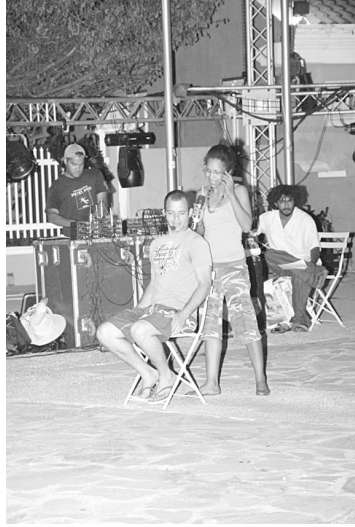
Preparations in full swing for opening of new museum



ORANJESTAD - On Sunday, Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet will open the new archeological museum of Aruba in downtown Oranjestad right after the Princess opens the visitor's center of the Arikok National Park. During the opening at the museum, there will be a



presentations by Michael Lampe and Datapanik, Takhai Mohamed, Aike Dirkzwager, Roland Colastica, Jacky Bernabela, Alydia Wever, Rufo Odor, Youmay Dormoy, Astra Paesch, Roley Kelkboom, Daniel van Schaick, Debbie Beukers, Priscilla Maria, Wilfred



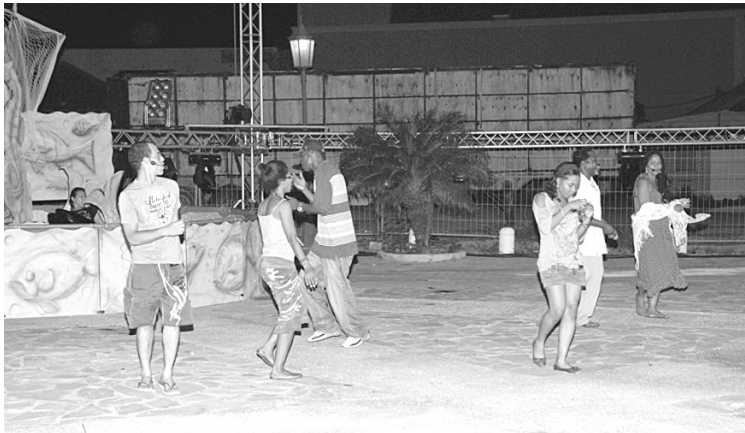
Jansen, Tommy Halman and a variety of other persons from other organizations and foundations on Aruba. Music will continue into the evening with Datapanik, Sonido Intifada, Le Groove and Youth Extreme.

On Monday the 27th of July HRH Princess Margriet and Mr. Pieter will attend the "Crownjewels", a bi-annual inter-cultural exchange between Aruba, The Netherlands Antilles and The Netherlands. On Tuesday the 28th of July the Princess will visit the Red Cross Aruba while Mr.



Pieter, Chair of the Kingdom Relations Committee, will attend several meetings with organizations on the subject. On Wednesday the 29th and Thursday the 30th Mr. Pieter will visit Saba and Statia (St. Eustatius) in his capacity of

Chair of the Kingdom Relations Committee and will award two Kingdom Compliments to two organizations that have a long history of working in close cooperation with similar organizations in The Netherlands. □



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Wednesday An island favorite - BBQ night

Thursday Chateaubriand, Oo-la-la

Friday International Seafood Festival

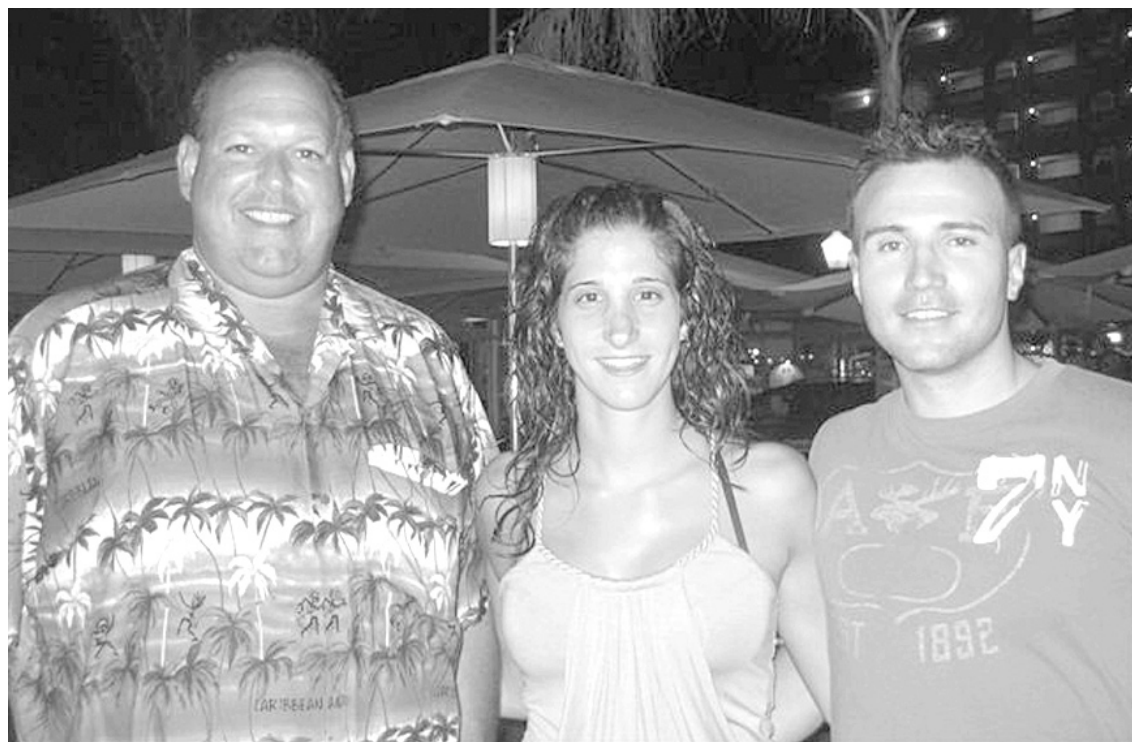
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PALM BEACH - Eric and Lisa are from Canada and are here on Aruba for their first time. They are staying at Marriott Ocean Club for 2 weeks. They have been snorkeling with Kent Gerber who is still on the Island for 4 weeks. He has come to Aruba 17 times for 3 weeks each time so he has spent 1 year on the Island. He loves to take his guest



snorkeling. Eric is a mechanic on helicopters for the air force. He spent 7 months last year in Afghanistan. He is very happy to be in Aruba for 2 weeks. Lisa is a teacher in a French school and also is a life-guard. She also LOVES Aruba. Kent is very glad they went snorkeling with him, because now he has his own private life-guard with him. □

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People from all over the world get together at Bugaloe: they have a few drinks, a bite to eat, they dance and sway and make new friends. If you have gotten curious here and now, check out the website www.bugaloe.com and you will see at one glance what we are talking about. No words will be needed anymore. Surf to the website for the Bugaloe Event Calendar or leave a note in the Guestbook.



Bugaloe is located at De Palm Pier in Palm Beach between RIU Palace and Radisson Resort.



Bugaloe's daily Happy Hours are considered the starting signal for an evening of partying on the island. Locals mingle with visitors and raise their glasses. When you get hungry, order a scrumptious burger, a gourmet pizza, tasty wings or a salad and party on.

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Bugaloe Beach Bar puts on live bands on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

Joyride, PM Band, DJ Jeroen and Marisela & Aquarius are playing the stars from the sky. These musical talents draw the crowds, so be there or be square!

For more information go to www.bugaloe.com.

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Wednesday 6-10pm: PM Band

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Café de Pijp opens its doors at South Beach Center – Palm Beach!

Bring this article for a FREE Heineken draft beer per person



PALM BEACH - Last week, Café de Pijp officially inaugurated its authentic "OUD HOLLANDS CAFÉ" conveniently located at the South Beach Center in Palm Beach opposite Segafredo. Café de Pijp has been operating since June 19th and has now made the opening official with various members of the press and guests. All guests received a warm welcome from the management in a nice and cozy ambiance with entertainment of the band The Equator.

Café de Pijp has been designed and founded by Mr. Alex de Haan. He has a

lot of experience with this kind of specific Oud Hollands Café in the Netherlands. The interior of Café de Pijp, which is almost 60 m2, has been constructed with dark wood materials which give the ambiance a very cozy and warm feeling.

They play all kinds of music, from Dutch, to English to Latin American. Every day you can enjoy the peanut consumption with your favorite drink. This peanut concept "Pelpinda's" is a typical Dutch custom, where the guests of the Dutch bar peel their peanuts and throw the shells on the floor and enjoy doing it! When entering the Dutch bar and encountering all the peanut shells on the floor, don't be surprised, as this is one of the most common custom for a typical Old Dutch Bar in the Netherlands.

Café de Pijp will have several activities programmed for its guests in the near future. These activities include Dart competitions among other cafes and guests, Karaoke nights, Jazz nights and Salsa nights. **Café de Pijp serves delicious snacks for its guests and invites their customers to enjoy these snacks free of charge on Friday afternoons.** Café de Pijp will also have their "Pijpjesavond" where one can buy beer at a very inexpensive price. Café de Pijp will also offer



a special drink of the week for the non beer drinkers. **Heineken draught beer will have a price of only AWG 5,- every day.**

For one month Café de Pijp will have a special Grand Opening offer in newspapers. Bring the newspaper ad and get a FREE Heineken draught beer with this ad per person. Do not miss this special offer, just bring it to Café de Pijp and enjoy your FREE beer in a typical "OUD HOLLANDS CAFÉ" Café

de Pijp offers its customers very attractive consumption prices compared to other bars in the vicinity, a great ambiance and LIVE entertainment by Alex as well!

We invite you to visit us at the South Beach Center and experience the fun yourself! For more information please call us at 745-4706.

Come And Have A Fashion Dinner At Senor Frogs with dinner starting at 6PM !!!

Christian Audigier Fashion Show Aruba & Red Carpet Event



ORANJESTAD – Tonight at Sr. Frogs, you are invited to join us for this one celebration of Christian Audigier/ Ed Hardy Models From Miiami,



New York & Los Angeles. The dinner starts at 6 PM for only \$20 and includes not only the dinner, but the exciting Red Carpet Event showcasing



Christian Audigier Fashion. Special Dj From Mansion Miami, Resident Dj Virus & The Awesome Mc Of Senor Frogs, Aruba: Mc Magnezz. There will be an Incredible Clothing Give Aways Throughout The Night with the Red Carpet Starts @ 9pm Sharp. You Can Also Buy Your ticket today at Senor Frogs, Gift Certificate For The Same Price!!!, And You Can Exchange It For Our Awesome Food And Drinks. Thats Right Pay \$20, And Get The Same Amount In Food And Drinks Inside the Restaurant!!!! Widely considered one of the most meteoric rises in fashion history, Christian Audigier has parlayed his design experience and business acumen to become a true fashion icon and entrepreneurial sensation



in less than four years. Through his collection of international companies, he has launched nine popular brands with over sixty licenses. He oversees an international conglomerate of his designer brands, including Ed Hardy®, Christian Audigier™, SMET™, Crystal Rock™, most recently C-Bar-ATM, Savoir Faire™, Evel Knievel™, Rock Fabulous™, and Paco Chicano™; this includes US and international wholesale distribution, as well as US and international retail stores. Christian made his mark



throughout the fashion industry after a fortuitous start at MacKeen Jeans. He has contributed to successful brands such as Diesel, Fiorucci, Bisou Bisou, Levi's, NafNaf and American Outfitters. Christian's style is so distinctive that he is known as the "King of Jeans." □



Fashion Life Sessions on Saturday at Paseo Herencia



PALM BEACH - Fashion Life Magazine is glad to invite you to its most recent production: Fashion Life Sessions. An event that will be held this Saturday July 25th, at Mr Jazz to celebrate Fashion Life magazine's Anniversary Edition.

The Fashion Life Sessions is an avant-garde event involving fashion and music in order to: Praise and encourage UPSCALE TOURISM in

the island. Honor and market our main sponsors. Serve as a marketing tool to promote Aruba's outstanding portfolio of tourist and local attractions, products and services. Contribute to the island's cultural, artistic and social aspects, actively supporting the local talent (models, artists, and DJs).

Fashion shows by the exclusive Brands DIESEL,

HUNKEMOLLER, SHABBY SHIC and SEASON BOUTIQUE will take place during the event along with the most exclusive models of Aruba, Venezuela and Mexico.

On the FASHION LIFE SESSIONS 500 people will enjoy from the special presentation of famous DJ MEG, performances by MONZTER electronic music,



and local DJs as DJ Yeimy. Dress Code: Casual. BE TRENDY. BE FUNKY. BE FASHION. BE IT. Special low price presale tickets: 25 afl. Available at: Underground Cycles, .IT Moda & Stile, Shabby Shic and Mr Jazz's door.

This event is brought to you by: We Marketing, Mr. Jazz, Brickell Bay Aruba, Pelican Adventures, Red Bull, Pantene, Subway, .IT Moda & Stile, Season Boutique, Hunkemoller, Shabby Shic, Koma Models & Beauty Team. □



1 in 7 Low-Income Preschoolers Is Obese

By Steven Reinberg
HealthDay Reporter

One in seven preschoolers from low-income families in the United States are considered obese, a new government report shows. However, the same report finds that the news is not all bad: The childhood obesity epidemic does seem to be leveling off among children in this group.

Among 2- to 4-year-olds from low-income families, the prevalence of obesity increased from 12.4 percent in 1998 to 14.5 percent in 2003. However, it went up only to 14.6 percent in 2008, according to the July 24 issue of the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, a publication of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention.

"Among lower-income, preschool-aged children, we are actually seeing a stabilization of obesity rates," said report co-author Laurence M. Grummer-Strawn, chief of CDC's Maternal Child Nutrition Branch in the Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity.

"For a number of years, we were seeing continuous rises in this obesity epidemic and it looks like over the last five years we have actually seen that rate stabilize," he said.

"Of course, we are not where we want to be. We want to see much more improvement, but it's at least good news that things are not continuing to get

worse."

Why obesity in this age group is stabilizing is not completely clear, Grummer-Strawn said. "There has been more emphasis on pediatric obesity among low-income populations," he said. "There have been initiatives to promote breast-feeding, initiatives to use low-fat or skim milk, initiatives to reduce television watching and shaping behaviors toward better nutrition and physical activity," he noted. But there remains a large racial and ethnic disparity in the obesity epidemic among preschoolers, Grummer-Strawn added.

Even though the prevalence

of obesity has stayed steady in many parts of the country, it is still increasing among American Indian and Alaska Native children. Among these children, the prevalence of obesity has gone up about a half-percentage point each year from 2003 to 2008, according to the report.

As a matter of fact, American Indian or Alaska Native children had the highest obesity rates in 2008, at 21.2 percent, followed by Hispanic children at 18.5 percent.

The lowest obesity rates were among white children, at 12.6 percent, Asian or Pacific Islander children,

at 12.3 percent, and black children, at 11.8 percent, the report found.

Only in Colorado and Hawaii were the obesity rates 10 percent or less among poor preschoolers, and only among Indian Tribal Organizations were the obesity rates over 20 percent.

"We need to be thinking about how to change our communities to be much healthier for our children," Grummer-Strawn said.

There need to be better parks and playgrounds "so that children can get outside and play," he said. "We also need to improve access to healthier foods." □

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Amazon 2Q profit falls with Toys R Us settlement



By **RACHEL METZ**,
AP Technology Writer
SAN FRANCISCO - Amazon.com Inc. said Thursday that its second-quarter earnings fell while sales rose, as the leading online retailer recorded a \$51 million payment to settle a long-standing dispute with former partner Toys R Us. The revenue increase was not enough to placate analysts, who were expecting even more than Amazon delivered. Shares of Seattle-based Amazon fell nearly 7 percent

in extended trading after the results were released.

Sanford C. Bernstein analyst Jeffrey Lindsay said the company's report was generally good, but its stock — which hit a 52-week high of \$94.40 during regular trading — was priced for a blowout quarter.

"That's why you got such a negative reaction after hours," he said.

Amazon earned \$142 million, or 32 cents per share, in the April-June quarter, 10 percent lower than the profit of \$158 million, or 37 cents per share, a year ago. Analysts polled by Thomson Reuters expected a penny less per share.

Sales climbed nearly 15 percent to \$4.65 billion, slightly below analyst estimates of \$4.69 billion. Amazon's sales were helped last year by a \$53 million non-cash gain from the sale of European DVD rental assets.

Sales of items such as books, CDs and DVDs inched up 1 percent to \$2.44 billion

in the second quarter, while electronics and other general merchandise sales soared 35 percent to \$2.07 billion.

The company's North American sales rose 13 percent, while international sales increased 16 percent.

During a conference call with reporters, Chief Financial Officer Tom Szkutak said the company saw declines in some North American media categories, including video games and video game consoles.

He noted that in the year before, three of the four hottest games were released during the second quarter, including Nintendo Co.'s popular "Wii Fit." This year's gaming decline was balanced out by increased book sales, he said.

Szkutak said that third-party sellers, who offer their goods to consumers through Amazon, made up 30 percent of total unit sales — an increase from the previous year.

Amazon's net shipping cost, which is a closely watched

metric, rose to \$147 million from \$128 million last year. Revenue from shipping — which includes its membership-based two-day shipping program, Amazon Prime, and its third-party shipping program, Fulfillment by Amazon — dipped to \$185 million from \$186 million.

In a separate conference call with analysts, the company continued to decline to give details about sales of its electronic reader, Kindle, the price of which Amazon lowered by \$60 to \$299 in July. Sony shipped 400,000 of its \$270 competing Reader device between its original debut in late 2006 and January, company spokeswoman Valerie Motis said.

Interest in e-books and related reading devices like the Kindle and the Reader has climbed in the past several years, though the products still make up a small slice of the overall book market. Momentum continued to build this week, as USA Today said Wednesday that its list of best-selling books will now include Kindle book sales in determining overall sales. Barnes & Noble Inc. said it will launch a large e-bookstore with titles that are readable on devices like iPhones and BlackBerrys. Barnes & Noble will also provide digital books for an e-reader that Mountain View-based Plastic Logic Ltd. expects to release next year.

Without providing specifics, Szkutak said that Kindle sales "are exceeding our

expectations" and the lower price has been "helpful." He wouldn't say if Amazon plans to release the Kindle outside the United States, but said the international market is "clearly an opportunity."

Szkutak offered some financial details regarding Zappos.com Inc., the privately held online shoe store that Amazon said on Wednesday it plans to buy in a deal worth about \$850 million. Las Vegas-based Zappos had about \$635 million in revenue last year and a "small profit," he said. Amazon already runs its own shoe and handbag shop, Endless.com, and both will continue to run as separate entities after the acquisition.

Lindsay said these figures show Amazon paid handsomely for Zappos. For the current quarter, Amazon forecast sales of \$4.75 billion to \$5.25 billion, in line with analyst estimates for \$4.92 billion.

Amazon said in June it agreed to pay \$51 million to Toys R Us Inc. to end a dispute that began in 2004. The company is making the payment in the current quarter but charged it to operating expenses in the just-reported second quarter.

The lawsuit was over a partnership that gave Toys R Us exclusive rights to supply some toy products on Amazon's site. Wayne, N.J.-based Toys R Us claimed Amazon violated the partnership by letting others sell some toys on Amazon.com, while Amazon said the toy seller failed to keep items in stock. □

SIRLOIN STEAK \$9.99



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Dow tops 9,000 as home sales rise for 3rd month

By TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK — Investors celebrated news of another jump in home sales by propelling the Dow Jones industrials to their first close above 9,000 since January. The stock market's best-known indicator shot up almost 190 points Thursday to 9,069.29, its highest level since November, and all the big indexes gained more than 2 percent.

News that existing home sales rose in June for the third straight month and by a higher-than-expected amount led investors to extend a buying spree that has now lifted the Dow 923 points, or 11 percent, in just nine days. On paper, U.S. stocks have gained \$1.2 trillion in value.

The week's economic news and upbeat earnings reports and forecasts from companies including chip maker Intel Corp. and heavy equipment maker Caterpillar Inc. convinced investors that the bets they've placed since March on a recovering economy were well-founded. Still, the economy, and in turn, the market, are likely to face more quicksand pits in the months ahead. Many more companies, including retailers, who are a barometer of consumer spending, have yet to announce second-quarter earnings. And many of the corporations that have already released their reports said they made money because they had cut costs so deeply, something that they can't keep doing indefinitely.

There was already some troubling earnings news after trading ended Thursday. Microsoft Corp. missed analysts' expectations for revenue, sending its shares lower in extended trading. American Express Co. and Amazon.com also traded lower after releasing their earnings.

Another ongoing problem is the banking business. Banks are forecasting that they'll continue to suffer losses from loans as consumers keep getting laid off. But some analysts don't believe investors are caving in to euphoria.

"I don't think the market is signaling that we are fully healed at all but it is telling us that there is a strong likelihood that a recovery is under way," said Ciaran O'Kelly, head of equities, Americas, at Nomura Securities Intl. Inc. in New York. Analysts also caution that volume remains relatively light, as is typical of the summer months when many traders take vacations. It's easier for the market to make big swings when there are fewer trades.

The Dow rose 188.03, or 2.1 percent, to 9,069.29. It was the highest finish for the blue chips since Nov. 5 and the first time the Dow has traded or closed above 9,000 since January. Even with the gains, the Dow is still far off its peak of 14,165 in October 2007.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 22.22, or 2.3 percent, to 976.29. It hasn't traded or closed above 1,000 since early November.

The Nasdaq composite index rose 47.22, or 2.5 percent, to 1,973.60, its 12th straight advance. The Nasdaq hasn't had a rally that long since a streak that ended Jan. 8, 1992. About five stocks rose for every one that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where consolidated volume came to 6 billion shares, compared with 4.7 billion Wednesday.

Bond prices tumbled, pushing their yields higher, as money flowed back into the stock market and out of safe-haven investments. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which is closely tied to home mortgage rates, jumped to 3.67 percent from 3.55 percent late Wednesday.

The Realtors said sales of previously occupied homes rose 3.6 percent in June. Sales came in at 4.89 million, above the 4.84 million analysts expected.

Dealmaking also supported stocks. Investors look to companies' willingness to make acquisitions — and part with cash or take on debt — as a sign of confidence.

In health care, Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. plans to acquire Medarex Inc. for about \$2.1 billion. Medarex surged \$7.49, or 89 percent, to \$15.89, while Bristol-Myers rose 57 cents, or 2.8 percent, to \$20.86.

Amazon.com Inc. agreed to buy Zappos.com Inc., a privately held online shoe store, in a deal worth about \$850 million. Amazon rose \$5.08, or 5.7 percent, to \$93.87. It tumbled to \$87.58 after its earnings were released.

Among the day's earnings



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Thursday, July 23, 2009 in New York. Investors celebrated news of another jump in home sales by propelling the Dow Jones industrials to their first close above 9,000 since January.

(AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

news, Ford Motor Co. announced a profit that was a huge improvement over the record \$8.7 billion loss it reported a year earlier. Without one-time gains, the car maker would have lost \$424 million, or 21 cents per share. That is still smaller than the loss of 50 cents per share analysts had been expecting. Ford rose 60 cents, or 9.4 percent, to \$6.98. Microsoft, which rose 76 cents to \$25.56 in regular trading, fell to \$23.62 in after-hours activity. American Express traded at \$28.05 in extended trading after rising 69 cents to \$29.45 during the day.

Some analysts warn that stocks won't be able to hold their gains if companies can't increase earnings by boosting revenue rather than slashing costs.

"It's like going on a diet. You can only starve yourself for so long," said Lawrence Creatura, portfolio manager at Federated Investors in Rochester, N.Y. "You cannot cost cut your way to prosperity."

Creatura noted that companies are reducing costs in large part by getting rid of workers. That could wind up hurting other businesses as the ranks of unemployed people grow. □



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Watch out for an Iranian backlash

By Joshua Gleis

New York – As hopes run high that Iran's political upheaval will ultimately lead to positive changes in the regime, a word of caution for the West: When Middle Eastern powers feel trapped, they tend to swing blindly at outside states.

The Arab world has been focusing much attention on Israel and its conflict with the Palestinians in an effort to redirect their domestic populations' collective attention away from their own trouble. The Iranian government seems to be following this tactic.

Even as President Obama goes to lengths to indicate that the US is not behind Iran's upheaval, the Iranian regime has cautioned Americans to stay out of its affairs. This has increased the tension, and further muted the chances of successful nuclear negotiations with the US and Europe.

If internal pressure remains, and Iran's current leadership led by Ayatollah Khamenei feels further threatened, it has the power to make things turn ugly fast.

Iran might decide to ratchet up the tension with Britain, knowing that the UK is limited in responding. In March 2007, Iranians captured 15 British sailors at gunpoint and held them for nearly two weeks, claiming they had "invaded" Iranian waters.

In both that instance and the recent arrests of British embassy employees, Britain warned of serious consequences for Iranian intimidation, but backed down once its personnel were released.

As the largest state sponsor of terrorist groups, Iran may decide to use its proxy force Hezbollah to carry out a deadly terrorist attack.

Hezbollah cells are known to operate around the world. And recently, New York City's Police Department deputy commissioner of counter terrorism warned that Hezbollah was more dangerous than Al Qaeda.

If Iran's leadership feels its foundation is at risk, it may authorize actions to refocus the attention of the international community, thus allowing it to more seriously crack down on Iranian dissenters. These actions could take the form of a major terrorist attack, like the one it carried out in 1994 at the Buenos Aires Jewish community center. It could also take the form of renewed attempts at hostilities on Israel's northern border, now that Hezbollah did not win a majority in recent elections and has reaffirmed its support for Khamenei's leadership.

Another measure could come in the form of its nuclear program. Iran is seeking nuclear technology, and the Israelis have expressed concern that Iran is speeding up its missile development. If negotiations over Iran's nuclear program continue to stall, Israel or the US may feel compelled to reply with force. □



Obama's Public Support Cracking at 6 Months

David Paul Kuhn

Barack Obama is a long way from his honeymoon.

This week Obama crossed the six-month mark with a public approval rating in the lower half of modern presidents, compared to the 11 presidents regularly polled by Gallup in the post-War World II era.

In Depth: 10 of History's Boldest Presidential Promises

In Depth: Top Earners in Obama's Administration

Obama's final approval rating after his first half year in office, based on a three-day average as of Tuesday, is 57 percent--ranking eighth of the 11 modern presidents.

In statistical terms, Obama is tied with George W. Bush (whom Obama technically falls a point above) and Richard Nixon (whom Obama technically falls a point below).

But W. Bush's was steady during his first six months. By comparison, Obama's had an average public approval of 67 percent during his first week in office. Twenty-five weeks later, his weekly average fell to 59 percent.

Obama is far from dovetailing. Over the course of his first six months, Obama remains on average more popular than any president since Jimmy Carter. Obama averages an approval rating of 62 percent during his first half-year in office, tying Richard Nixon for the mean of modern presidents, and only a point below his standing during his first 100 days. But it's the direction of his momentum that should concern this White House.

Obama's approval was down 6 points at six months, compared to day 100. Just this week, the Washington Post-ABC News Poll reported that only 49 percent of Americans approve of how Obama is handling health care, a drop of 8 points since the 100-day mark. Even fewer Americans, a mere 43 percent, approve of his handling of the federal budget deficit--a drop of 9 points since the 100-day mark.

That loss of public support on two key issues, combined with the ebb in his overall standing, marks an intangible early wound to this president.

Obama came into office rife with comparisons to the giants of the Democratic Party, men like FDR or JFK. But JFK stood at 75 percent during June and July; 18 points above Obama's standing at the six-month mark. Obama still stands a couple points above Ronald Reagan's six-month average, however.

Certainly, early standing is not destiny. Some presidents who left office in poor standing, like Carter and Lyndon Johnson, were more popular at this point.

Obama maintains the strongest support of his base, 90 percent, of all modern presidents. But even that plus comes with a bite.

His support from the political opposition is the second lowest on average, 28 percent. That's above Clinton, who never had Obama's Democratic backing, and a couple points below W. Bush's Democratic backing over his first six months. As a result, Obama continues to be the most polarizing modern president.

Liberals have urged Obama to disregard his GOP opposition. But most moderate and conservative Democrats lack that luxury. There are 49 House Democrats from districts won by John McCain in 2008. And it's those 49, along with other members from swing districts and some similarly positioned Democratic senators, whose seats are most vulnerable next year.

Obama's ability to earn moderate and conservative Democrats' support is inextricably tied to his ability to promise electoral cover during difficult legislation. But those Blue Dog Democrats will head home in August to ads framing health care reform as "rationing," with a tax hike to boot. They are tied to a still-popular president, but one whose electoral cover has shrunk.

Obama's greatest stake remains in non-partisans. The general rule for modern presidents is that as the middle goes, so goes their mandate. Many initially popular presidents, like Carter and Reagan, first lost that middle, and their majority, by their first winter in office.

Obama's independent support has averaged 60 percent over his first six months in office. But in the past three weeks, that independent support has held in the mid 50s. □

Judge approves deals to reprint 'Moonwalk'



FILE - In this March 17, 2005 file photo, Michael Jackson arrives at the Santa Barbara County Courthouse in Santa Maria, Calif. A judge has approved a deal that will bring Michael Jackson's autobiography, 'Moonwalk' back to store shelves.

(AP Photo/Michael A. Mariant, File)

By ANTHONY McCARTNEY, AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES — A judge on Thursday cleared the way for Michael Jackson's autobiography, "Moonwalk," to return to store shelves in the United States, Canada and Europe.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Mitchell Beckloff approved a request by the temporary administrators of

the pop icon's estate to enter into new publishing deals.

Details of the agreements were filed under seal. But the deals will allow the 1988 book to be reprinted in the United States, Canada, England, Germany and France.

Publishing rights in the United States and Canada will be given to Shaye Areheart, who was the original editor of "Moonwalk." Her company is a part of Random House Inc. "Moonwalk" has been out of print for more than a decade. It was originally published by Doubleday and was acquired by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.

Other publishers will handle the overseas releases.

The "Moonwalk" rights are the first deal that the temporary administrators of Jackson's estate have brought to Beckloff for approval. The estate is being handled by attorney John Branca and music executive and Jackson family friend John McClain.

Court records state "Moonwalk" could hit store shelves in France by August. The records don't indicate when sales in other countries would begin. □

"Potter" prepared to fend off trio of newcomers

By Carl DiOrio

LOS ANGELES (Hollywood Reporter) — "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" is on course to be crowned king of the domestic box office again this weekend.

With \$200 million in its cauldron at the start of just its second weekend, Warner Bros.' "Prince" could fall 60 percent from its first-frame tally and still produce a \$31 million sophomore session. Bolstering the film's prospects is its expansion from four high-grossing Imax venues to 162.

Although three films opening in wide release Friday are expected to do solid business, none is likely to compete for the weekend title.

Sony's romantic comedy "The Ugly Truth," helmed by Robert Luketic ("21") and starring Katherine Heigl and Gerard Butler, might be the strongest of the new pictures, with prerelease tracking surveys showing prospects for an opening north of \$20 million.

Produced for less than \$40 million, "Truth" carries an

R rating but is likely to draw best among older females, who executives hope will rope in a few guys for a date-night outing. Sony offered 160 sneak previews of "Truth" last weekend and attracted 90 percent capacity audiences.

Meanwhile, Disney's Jerry Bruckheimer-produced family action-comedy "G-Force," featuring a mix of CGI and live action, also is looking good amid signs that its hefty marketing campaign is taking hold.

Helmed by effects supervisor-turned-director Hoyt Yeatman, "G-Force" also could top \$20 million this weekend. Premium ticket prices in more than 1,600 3D auditoriums will help the cause. The studio's May release of Pixar's "Up" boasted 1,540 3D locations.

But there's little doubt the still-strong interest in the Potter pic will affect "G-Force," which carries the same PG rating. The question is whether the impact will be minimum or severe. "Prince" and "G-Force" target a similar audience, but the latter plays much younger.

Set for 3,693 playdates, "G-Force" totes a negative cost of \$80 million-plus.

Warners' R-rated horror film "Orphan" should do midteen millions this weekend, with solid interest evident among younger moviegoers. The story of a demon-seed orphan on a tear is female-oriented, but the question remains whether young female moviegoers will be turned off by the restricted rating. "Orphan" was directed by Jaume Collet-Serra ("Goal II: Living the Dream"). □

Nas ordered to make \$40K monthly payments to Kelis



FILE - In this Feb. 10, 2008 file photo, singer Kelis, left, and Nas pose on the press line at the Entertainment Weekly Island Def Jam Grammy party in Los Angeles.

(AP Photo/Dan Steinberg, file)

By ANTHONY McCARTNEY, AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES — A judge has ordered Nas to pay Kelis nearly \$40,000 in monthly support for the near future, a day after the

"Milkshake" singer gave birth to the divorcing couple's baby boy.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Louis Meisinger issued the order at a Thursday hearing. Neither Nas, whose full name is Nasir Jones, nor Kelis, whose full name is Kelis Rogers, attended Thursday's hearing. Rogers will receive \$30,471 in spousal support per month; the couple's son will receive \$9,027, according to the court records.

Rogers gave birth to the boy, named Knight, at a New York hospital Wednesday. The 29-year-old filed for divorce from the rapper in April. The couple was married in July 2003.

The two have been sparring over support payments for several months, with Rogers contending that Jones hasn't paid many of the costs of her pregnancy and her expenses. His

attorney, Mark Vincent Kaplan, told the judge that the rapper has paid \$30,000 in expenses and the former couple's health insurance has been maintained. A hearing on whether the payments should be altered will be heard on Sept. 8.

Kaplan proposed paying Rogers a one-time payment of \$20,000 until the judge could settle on an appropriate spousal and child support amount at a later hearing.

Meisinger rejected that offer, saying more money per month would be needed to accommodate Rogers' lifestyle and was warranted based on income declarations filed with the court. Meisinger told Rogers' attorney, Laura Wasser, that the singer has 30 days to decide whether to return to the couple's Los Angeles home. Jones is paying to maintain the property in the meantime. □



Crowds line up outside the San Diego Convention Center for the first day of the Comic-Con International 2009 convention held in San Diego Thursday, July 23, 2009. The annual comic book and popular arts convention attracts over 100,000 people and runs through Sunday July 26.

(AP Photo/Denis Poroy)

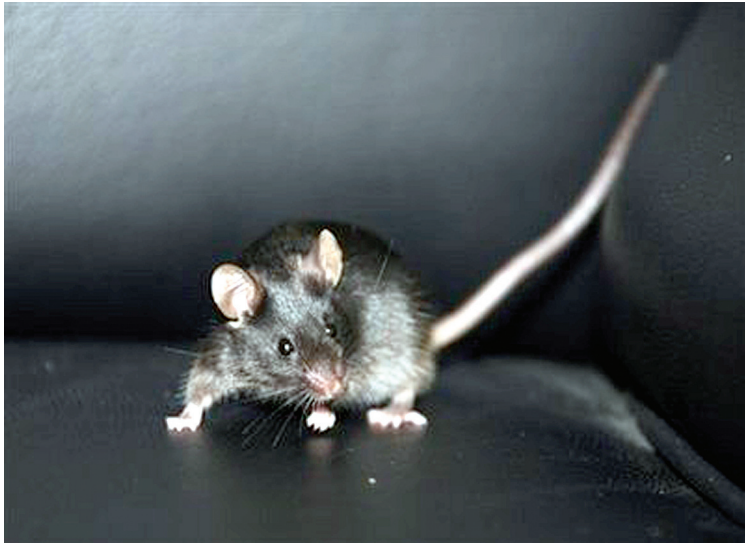
Rogen shows off 'Green Hornet' car at Comic Con

SAN DIEGO — Seth Rogen arrived at Comic Con with a sweet ride.

The "Funny People" actor stopped by the pop-culture convention's show floor Wednesday to unveil the Black Beauty, a modified 1965 Chrysler Crown Imperial he'll drive in "The Green Hornet." Rogen, with writing partner Evan Goldberg, wrote the script to the upcoming big-screen relaunch of the comic book and TV show about a masked crime-fighter.

The vehicle is an homage to the Black Beauty driven by Van Williams in the original series. Rogen said the car's weapons — which include rockets, mini-guns and a "big flame-thrower" — were upgraded for the film to make them more powerful. □

Non-embryonic stem cells pass major hurdle in mice



This undated handout photo provided by the journal Nature shows a live mouse produced from stem cells that were coaxed from skin tissue of adult mice and then reprogrammed. Two teams of Chinese scientists have made a major advance in the development of a new kind of stem cell that doesn't involve destroying embryos.

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**,
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON — Two teams of Chinese scientists have made a major advance in mice in the development of a new kind of stem cell that doesn't involve destroying embryos. Those cells are derived from ordinary skin cells, and when

(AP Photo/Nature, Dr. Qi Zhou)

they were created two years ago from human skin and genetically reprogrammed, it was hailed as a breakthrough. But questions remained whether they could act as chameleon-like as embryonic stem cells and morph into any cell type in the body.

Onewaytoshowthatversatility

is if the new reprogrammed stem cells could be used to produce an entire new life.

And now researchers have shown they can in mice.

For the first time, they were able to produce live mice from stem cells that were coaxed from skin tissue of adult mice and then reprogrammed.

And while there were abnormalities and unusual deaths with some of the first generation of mice, one team produced enough normal mice this way to create hundreds of second and third generation mice.

Studies on this type of stem cell, called iPS for induced pluripotent stem cells, were released Thursday by two competing scientific journals, Nature and Cell Stem Cell.

"We demonstrated the practicality of using iPS cells," said Fanyi Zeng, associate director of the Shanghai Institute of Medical Genetics and co-author of the larger, more successful study, which

appears in Nature.

A leading U.S. stem cell researcher who wasn't part of either study, Dr. George Daley of the Harvard Stem Cell Institute and Children's Hospital of Boston, hailed the work as important because it shows that the new type of stem cells "satisfy the most stringent criteria of embryonic stem cells — the ability to make a mouse entirely from cells in a petri dish."

These type of stem cells generate less controversy than embryonic stem cells, which scientists have been studying for more than a decade. Embryonic stem cells involve the destruction of embryos, usually excess from fertility clinics.

The new type of stem cells use a virus to reprogram the genetic information of the skin cell to make it a stem cell. Because it can't create a placenta, the Chinese researchers had to then combine the new stem cell with cells that provide a

placenta.

Zeng said all types of stem cell research should continue, not just the new type.

Her study produced 27 live mice. Some of the mice, she said, had "abnormalities," but she declined to say what those were or how extensive the problems were. That will be in a future report, she said.

Those 27 mice produced second and third generations that included hundreds of mice with no noticeable abnormalities.

The other team got only four births; three died quickly and only one made it into normal adulthood.

"We are confident that tremendous good can come from demonstrating the versatility of reprogrammed cells in mice," Zeng wrote in an e-mail. She said while this is just in mice it could help doctors "understand the root causes of disease and lead to viable treatments and cures of human afflictions." □



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FBI agents lead arrested suspects from their headquarters as part of a corruption investigation, Thursday, July 23, 2009, in Newark, N.J.

Associated Press

Three mayors, lawmakers arrested in corruption case

DAVID PORTER

Associated Press Writer

NEWARK, New Jersey (AP) — The mayors of three New Jersey cities, two state legislators and several rabbis were among more than 40 people arrested Thursday in a sweeping corruption investigation that began as a probe into an international money laundering ring that trafficked in goods as diverse as human organs and fake designer handbags.

Among 44 people arrested Thursday were Hoboken Mayor Peter Cammarano III, Secaucus Mayor Dennis Elwell, Jersey City Deputy Mayor Leona Beldini, state Assemblyman President L. Harvey Smith and state Assemblyman Daniel Van Pelt.

Ridgefield Mayor Anthony Suarez, who is also an attorney, is charged with agreeing to accept an illegal \$10,000 cash payment for his legal defense fund.

The number of arrests was noteworthy even for New Jersey, a state that has seen more than 130 public officials plead guilty or be convicted of corruption since 2001.

“New Jersey’s corruption problem is one of the worst, if not the worst, in the nation,” said Ed Kahrer, who heads the FBI’s white collar and public corruption investigation division. “Corruption is a cancer that is destroying the core values of this state.”

Gov. Jon Corzine reacted to the corruption probe Thursday morning by saying, “any corruption is unacceptable — anywhere, anytime, by

anybody. The scale of corruption we’re seeing as this unfolds is simply outrageous and cannot be tolerated.”

FBI agents seized documents from Community Affairs Commissioner Joseph Doria’s home and office Thursday, but federal officials would not say whether the former Democratic state senator from Bayonne would face criminal charges. Doria’s office did not return messages for comment Thursday.

In separate money laundering complaints, several rabbis from New York City’s Brooklyn borough and New Jersey were charged with offenses ranging from the trafficking of kidneys from Israeli donors to laundering proceeds from selling fake Gucci and Prada bags.

Van Pelt is accused of accepting \$10,000 from a cooperating government witness posing as a developer who sought help in getting permits for a project in Ocean County.

Smith, the Jersey City Council President, and several other current and former Jersey City public officials also are accused of accepting money to help the fake developer gain permits and approvals.

Beldini, 74, is charged with conspiracy to commit extortion by taking \$20,000 in illegal campaign contributions. Jersey City Mayor Jerramiah Healy said Thursday the charges were “a little shocking.”

“I have full faith in Leona,” Healy said. “She’s a good friend of mine — was and will be.”

Continued on Next Page

Cronkite eulogized as newsman, friend, father

FRAZIER MOORE

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Walter Cronkite was remembered as a great journalist, sailor, friend and father during services that, despite the grandeur of the setting, felt remarkably comfortable — like the man. For his reporting, Cronkite came to be called “the most trusted man in America” and was widely considered the premier TV journalist of his time.

He anchored “The CBS Evening News” from 1962 until 1981 — a period that included the Vietnam War, the space race, the assassinations of John and Robert Kennedy as well as Martin Luther King Jr. and Watergate.

“I was often asked, ‘What he’s really like?’



In this photo taken on Sept. 24, 2007, former news anchor Walter Cronkite arrives at the Metropolitan Opera 2007-08 season opening gala. Famed CBS News anchor Walter Cronkite, known as the ‘most trusted man in America’ has died, Friday, July 17, 2009. He was 92.

Associated Press

Continued on Page B5



U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton responds to questions during a news conference Thursday, July 23, 2009, at the ASEAN Regional Forum in Phuket, Thailand. Clinton urged Asian nations to vigorously enforce the latest U.N. sanctions against North Korea.

Associated Press

Clinton, North Korea exchange barbs on nukes

DENIS D. GRAY

Associated Press Writer

PHUKET, Thailand (AP) — Hillary Rodham Clinton and North Korea exchanged pointed barbs, with Clinton declaring that the North “has no friends left” and the communist regime calling the U.S. secretary of state a “schoolgirl.”

The sharp words came Thursday as North Korea announced it had refused to re-enter talks to terminate its nuclear weapons program.

Continued on Page B7



In this photo taken Tuesday, June 30, 2009, Iraqi Army soldiers stand guard in central Baghdad, Iraq. Iraqis are skeptical that much will change after last week's pullback of U.S. combat troops from Baghdad and other cities, a sentiment not shared by their government.

Associated Press

CORRUPTION CASE

Continued from Front Page

Cammarano, 32, who won a runoff election last month, is charged with accepting \$25,000 in cash bribes from an undercover cooperating witness. Elwell is charged

with taking \$10,000.

Joseph Hayden, an attorney representing Cammarano, said his client "is innocent of these charges. He intends to fight them with all his strength until he proves his innocence." According to the U.S.

Attorney's Office, the investigation initially focused, with the help of the cooperating witness, on the money laundering network that operated between Brooklyn; Deal, New Jersey; and Israel. The network is alleged to have laundered tens of millions of dollars through charities controlled by rabbis in New York and New Jersey.

Israeli police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said he has heard of the story but knows nothing of kidneys being sold by Israelis.

The investigation widened to include official corruption in July 2007 when the cooperating witness approached public officials in Hudson County posing as a developer seeking to build in the Jersey City area.

Hoboken's waterfront has proven to be an especially lucrative piece of real estate across from midtown

Manhattan. Developers have put up dozens of buildings in the last 15 years in the mile-square city. It had a prime view on July 4 of fireworks over the Hudson River.

The fears that the city was being overdeveloped has become a hot topic during elections among candidates.

In secretly recorded conversations outlined in the complaint against Cammarano, the candidate made it clear to prospective campaign donors that he was a friend of developers.

When a cooperating witness posing as a developer who was donating \$5,000 to the campaign told Cammarano just days before the mayoral election that he wanted to make sure he had his support with "some properties we're working on," Cammarano is quoted as saying, "I'll be there."

In Deal, Mike Winnick of

the Elberon section of Long Branch was praying inside the Deal Synagogue when it was raided by agents from the FBI, federal tax agency the IRS and the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office.

"Everyone was looking at each other, like, 'What's going on here?'" he said.

Winnick said four FBI agents escorted a rabbi from the synagogue into his office and blocked the doorway.

Winnick said he left shortly afterward.

Nearby, FBI and IRS agents removed several boxes from the Deal Yeshiva, a school that educates the children of Sephardic Jews.

Busloads carrying those arrested were brought to the FBI's Newark field office Thursday morning. One agent slowly walked an elderly rabbi into the building as another covered his face with a felt hat. □

Documents: US al-Qaida recruit trained as bomber

ADAM GOLDMAN
DEVLIN BARRETT

Associated Press Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — An American-born terrorist-in-training learned how to shoot rockets and assault rifles and construct a suicide bomber's vest at al-Qaida camps in Pakistan, according to documents obtained Thursday by The Associated Press.

Bryant Neal Vinas took courses in plastic explosives and bomb theory, according to a statement he gave to investigators as part of a terrorism case in Belgium. The statement, provided to the AP on Thursday, was to be released after a hearing Friday, officials said.

Since the 26-year-old New York man's arrest in Pakistan in November 2008, Vinas has become one of the most valuable informants in the war on terrorism, giving investigators a fascinating and rare look into al-Qaida's day-to-day operations in a lawless region bordering Afghanistan.

He provided insights on many key members of Al-Qaida and how the organization recruited and indoctrinated people. Vinas also revealed the group gave lessons on assassination, poison, kidnapping, forgery and advanced bomb making, according to the statement.

Vinas told counterterrorism investigators about meetings with top al-Qaida members while staying at a network of hideouts on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, where he trained from about March 2008 to August 2008.

Pakistani authorities nabbed the 26-year-old New Yorker after he returned to city of Peshawar near the border of Afghanistan to find a wife, according to his statement.

While he has been in custody in New York, the U.S. has made a series of successful unmanned Predator drone strikes on suspected al-Qaida locations in the difficult-to-penetrate border region, raising questions about whether Vinas provided the information that led to any of the deadly attacks.

One of those strikes took place in northwest Pakistan on Nov. 19, about the time of Vinas' capture. The strike killed al-Qaida member Abdullah Azzam al-Saudi, who was reportedly a recruiter for the terrorist organization.

Vinas told authorities that he knew of an Abdullah Azzam, a law enforcement official told the AP, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the official wasn't authorized to speak publicly about the investigation.

Vinas' attorney Len Kamdang declined comment Thursday.

Vinas, who grew up in the New York City suburbs on Long Island, was charged in court papers unsealed Wednesday with giving al-Qaida "expert advice and assistance" about New York's transit system and with a rocket attack on U.S. forces in Afghanistan last year.

He pleaded guilty Jan. 28 to conspiring to murder U.S. nationals, supporting and receiving training from a foreign terrorist organization in a sealed courtroom in Brooklyn, according to a transcript of the hearing unsealed Thursday.

Vinas admitted to traveling to Pakistan in 2007 "with the intention of meeting and joining a jihadist group to fight American soldiers in Afghanistan," the transcript read.

He said he took part in two "missions" in September 2008 to attack a U.S. military base

near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

The first attack failed, Vinas said. A few days later, "I took part in firing rockets at an American military base. Although we intended to hit the military base and kill American soldiers, I was informed that the rockets missed and the attack failed."

After crossing back into Pakistan, Vinas accepted an invitation to become a suicide bomber. He eventually landed in the mountainous region of Waziristan where he came into contact with members of al-Qaida. Around March 2008, Vinas said he was accepted into al-Qaida and began intensive training.

Vinas said he told top al-Qaida officials about the New York commuter rail he traveled on frequently "to help plan a bottom attack of the Long Island Rail Road system." Law enforcement officials familiar with the case also said Vinas told investigators he heard discussions about targeting the Belgium metro system.

Vinas was interviewed this year in New York by Belgian prosecutors pursuing an anti-terror case against Malika El Aroud, Belgian prosecutors said.

El Aroud is the widow of a man involved in killing anti-Taliban warlord Ahmed Shah Massoud two days before the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Vinas' testimony was being submitted to a closed court hearing on Friday in Belgium to evaluate whether El Aroud and five others should remain in custody.

The six are charged with belonging to a terrorist organization, which Belgian officials say is part of an al-Qaida group plotting new attacks either in Europe or elsewhere. □

Nevada, Florida officials protest U.S. 'blacklist'

BRENDAN RILEY

Associated Press Writer

CARSON CITY, Nevada (AP)

— Politicians from Nevada and Florida expressed outrage Thursday at a report that some federal agencies have put the two tourist hotspots in the states on a "blacklist" when deciding where to hold conferences or meetings.

A Wall Street Journal article published Wednesday cited e-mails from the FBI and Department of Agriculture encouraging conference locations that aren't resort destinations and don't appear to be "lavish."

The issue quickly turned political.

Nevada Gov. Jim Gibbons, a Republican, said Thursday that the Obama administration "seemed to be completely unaware of the damage they are causing" by such policies. U.S. Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid of Nevada countered that President Obama was reversing such policies that began during the Bush administration.

Gibbons called the reported blacklist "an outrageous insult to the working families in Nevada" and urged the state's congressional delegation to press President Barack Obama for a change in such policies. "I am working hard to get more jobs and more tourists for Nevada to help our economy recover, and the Obama administration seems to be completely unaware of the damage they are causing to Nevada's economy and the people here," Gibbons said in a statement.

Gibbons said the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority reported hundreds of conventions and business meetings scheduled for the gambling mecca have canceled in the last several months, resulting in hundreds of millions of dollars in lost revenue.

The exact nature of the policies in the various federal agencies was not clear.

Reid inquired about the issue to the White House last month, claiming agencies including the FBI, General Services Agency and Bureau of Indian

Affairs had canceled recent Las Vegas meetings.

He then received a letter from a top aide to the president saying there's no "informal federal policy" against government meetings and conferences in Las Vegas. The letter from chief of staff Rahm Emanuel says value, not location, should be the basis for booking a trip.

Reid on Thursday also pointed to federal agency memos dating to 2006 that required special approval for meetings in gambling or resort locations, saying, "The restrictions initiated by the Bush administration are damaging to places like Las Vegas and Reno and I applaud President Obama's decision to reverse this policy."

The Journal said it learned from an Agriculture Department staffer familiar with that agency's guidelines on conferences that staffers are encouraged to hold meetings in cities that are lower-cost, "non-resort" travel hubs. The newspaper also quoted a Department of Justice spokeswoman as confirming

there's agency "guidance" to avoid conference locations "that give the appearance of being lavish or are resort destinations."

The Journal said cities on the lower-cost list included Chicago, Denver, Portland, Oregon, St. Louis, Washington, Milwaukee, Phoenix and Fort Collins, Colorado.

Sen. Bill Nelson, a Florida Democrat, planned to introduce legislation blocking federal agencies from making travel policies that blacklist U.S. cities. Orlando, home to Walt Disney World, is reportedly on the list of cities to avoid.

Rep. Suzanne Kosmas, also a Florida Democrat, said Thursday that she and a bipartisan group of lawmakers from Florida and Nevada would urge the Government Accountability Office to investigate the reports that cities such as Las Vegas and Orlando with "high-value accommodations" have been blacklisted.

"We need to make sure taxpayer dollars are protected, and eliminating destinations



Mickey Mouse joins over 1,000 new American citizens as they celebrate their new status during a mass naturalization ceremony at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom theme park in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., Friday, July 3, 2009.

Associated Press

for federal conferences based on anything other than cost effectiveness is a recipe for waste," she said.

Nelson said he plans to outlaw blacklisting by introducing an amendment to a pending tourism promotion bill. □

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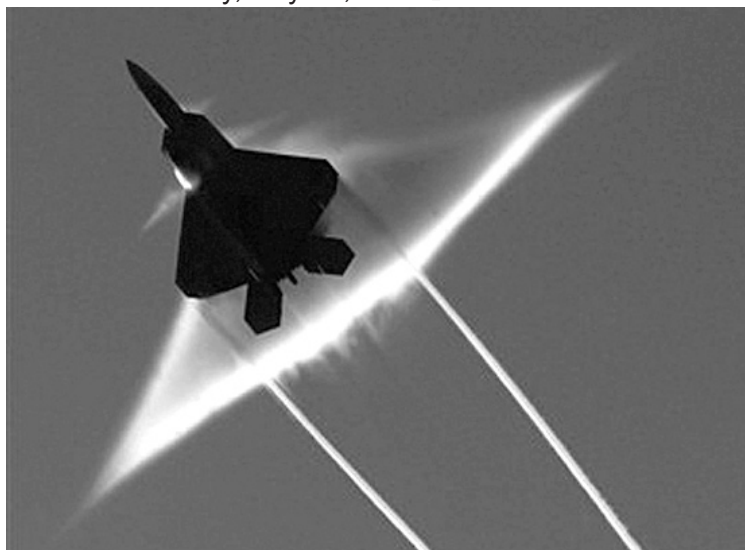
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This June 22, 2009 photo released by the U.S. Navy shows an Air Force F-22 Raptor executing a supersonic flyby over the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis in the Gulf of Alaska. The Senate voted Tuesday to halt production of the Air Force's missile-eluding F-22 Raptor fighter jets in a high-stakes, veto-laden showdown over President Barack Obama's efforts to shift defense spending to a next generation of smaller, single-engine F-35 Joint Strike Fighters.

Associated Press

Senate sides with Obama, defunds F-35 jet engine

JIM ABRAMS

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Senate voted Thursday to eliminate spending on a jet engine program that the defense secretary says is superfluous, moving in step with Obama administration assertions that it is time to stop spending military dollars on programs that are not needed.

The voice vote on an amendment to eliminate funds for a backup engine for the F-35 next-generation fighter plane came as the Senate neared completion of a \$680 billion bill that authorizes defense programs for the fiscal year starting in October.

Just two days ago, the Senate went along with Defense Secretary Robert Gates' campaign to change the way the Pentagon buys weapons by stripping from the bill \$1.75 billion to produce more F-22 fighters, the high-tech aircraft that eventually will be supplanted by the F-35 as the military's main attack plane.

The White House has said that President Barack Obama would issue what would be the first veto of his presidency if the defense bill contained money for either of those programs.

In anticipation of an agreement with Russia later this year on reducing nuclear arsenals and replacing the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which expires in December, the Senate agreed that Congress would block spending to implement any new treaty that puts limitations on U.S. missile defense. Senators also demanded, in a voice vote, that the budget to maintain nuclear weapons and modernize the nuclear weapons complex be fully funded in fiscal 2011.

Whatever the negotiators eventually decide on, said Sen. Jon Kyl, sponsor of the amendment, "we need to start a process of modernizing our nuclear weapons program and stockpile."

The Russians have strongly objected to U.S. proposals to locate missile defense facilities in Poland and the Czech Republic to protect Europe from Iranian missile attacks, and have suggested that a nuclear weapons reduction agreement could hinge on the U.S. abandoning those proposals.

Separately, Sen. Joe Lieberman won approval of a nonbinding amendment stating that it is imperative that the United States have an effective missile defense program and that the Senate would only support an alternative to the Poland-Czech plan that offers the same capabilities of defending both the United States and Europe.

The debate over the second F-35 engine has gone on for more than a decade. The Pentagon gave the contract for the engine to United Technologies Corp.'s subsidiary Pratt & Whitney. But lawmakers, some with jobs in their states at stake, have continued to push for development of a backup engine built by General Electric Co. and Rolls Royce. Some \$2.5 billion has already been spent on the GE engine.

Both the F-22 and the F-35 are being built by the Lockheed Martin Corp.

On Tuesday, Gates wrote a letter to Senate leaders saying that "further expenditures on a second engine are unnecessary and will likely impede the progress of the overall F-35 program."

Lieberman argued that GE and its supporters were "trying to achieve through legislation what they could not achieve through competition."

The Pentagon in the coming decades plans to buy about 2,400 of the single-engine jet that would be used primarily to attack targets on the ground and would replace the F-16 and the Air Force's aging fleet of A-10s. Versions would also be produced for the Navy and Marine Corps as well as the Air Force, and about 600 would be built for foreign allies.

The House version of the defense bill passed in June contains more than \$300 million for spare parts for F-22s and \$600 million for the alternate F-35 engine. The Senate stops F-22 production at 187 planes. Those differences will need to be worked out in negotiations. □

Little Gregg Bird



Pa: Roland W. Peterson

Little Gregg Bird wants
to know more about birds
Being a birder (one who engages in birding)
He went to his grandfather
who was playing golf
and had just scored a birdie (a score of one stroke under par
for a hole)

Come here my little owlet (young owl)
Tell me of your problem
Grandpa why do they call
you mister Owl? (person of nocturnal habits)

Well little Greggy
As a birder who is always birding (hobby of observing wild
birds in their habitat)
you should know
I think that question is for the birds (ridiculous)
I will swallow my pride
The swallow is a swift-flying bird with a forked tail

You see my little Greggy
Birds are more than just feathers and wings
First let me start with a bird's eye view (an overall view)
You see that group of people there
they are birds of a feather (people with the same traits or
tastes)

Do you know that there are not
many birds that end their names with
"bird", e.g. like Mockingbird, Hummingbird etc.
How many do you know?

You see that man walking over there wearing that swallow-
tailed coat
They say he is a vulture (greedy and ruthless person)
He has a waddling walk (swaying from side to side like a
duck)

That sound you hear is a bittern,
It is the thumping cry
of a wading bird (a long legged bird that wades the
marshes for food)

Grandpa thanks, I got it
I got it Grandpa
You just keep on playing
But remember, better ten birdies in the sky
than one in a hole
Bye, bye little bird.



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Prosecutors tie tech to 19 hepatitis cases

P. SOLOMON BANDA
Associated Press Writer

DENVER (AP) — A grand jury indicted a surgery technician infected with hepatitis C on several charges Thursday, alleging she stole syringes with painkillers and replaced them with needles she had used. Prosecutors allege that at least 19 people contracted the disease as a result.

The allegations by prosecutors, also made Thursday, are the first direct link of hepatitis C cases to 26-year-old Kristen Diane Parker, who has tested positive for the ailment. Her attorney, Gregory Graf, did not immediately return a message.

Thursday's indictment charges Parker with 21 counts of tampering with a consumer product and 21 counts of obtaining a controlled substance by deceit and subterfuge.

Officials say up to 6,000 patients at Denver's Rose Medical Center and Audubon Surgery Center in Colorado Springs where Parker worked may have been exposed to the disease. Calls to spokesmen at both hospitals were not immediately returned. Parker also worked at hospitals in Mount Kisco, New York, and Houston. Health officials in those states have launched investigations.

Hospital and state health officials aren't sure how many people were injected with Parker's dirty needles, or exposed to saline

possibly contaminated by those needles. Thousands of former patients have been tested. Results have not been released by either hospital or state health officials.

All 19 hepatitis C cases have been found at Rose Medical Center.

"I am certain the 19 hepatitis C cases to date have been linked to Parker," said U.S. Attorney spokesman Jeff Dorschner.

State health officials have said they're working with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to

trace the disease. Dorschner said the cases were linked to Parker through a review of Rose's records that found the hepatitis C in former surgery patients were of the same genotype as Parker's.

Parker is being held without bail.

In a police interview shortly before her arrest June 30, Parker said she didn't have health insurance or money to pay for a doctor after a pre-employment blood test showed she was hepatitis C positive. She also said it wasn't clear to her that she

had tested positive.

The indictment handed up Thursday alleges Parker began taking the pain killers from operating rooms on Oct. 22, two days after she started working at Rose Medical Center.

Parker worked at Rose from Oct. 20 until April 13, when she was placed on administrative leave for failing a drug test.

She came under suspicion at Rose about two weeks earlier when a syringe in her top scrub pocket poked a co-worker. □



In this photo released by the Denver County Sheriff's Department, Kristen Diane Parker, 26, is shown. Parker, is accused of is accused of injecting herself with painkillers meant for patients, then filling the used syringes with saline solution.

Associated Press

CRONKITE EULOGIZED

Continued from Page B1

And I would always answer, 'He's just the way you hope he is,'" said Mike Ashford, a sailing comrade of more than 30 years and one of the speakers at Thursday's funeral.

Another speaker, longtime CBS newsman and "60 Minutes" commentator Andy Rooney, recalled meeting Cronkite when they both were in England covering World War II.

"You get to know someone pretty well in a war," said Rooney, describing Cronkite as "such a good friend."

"I just feel so terrible about Walter's death that I can hardly say anything," he admitted, excused himself and left the pulpit.

The services were witnessed by a near capacity crowd at the elegant, enormous St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in midtown Manhattan, where the Cronkite family has worshipped for years.

Broadcast journalists — co-workers, competitors, successors — were on hand, including Connie Chung, Bob Schieffer, Diane Sawyer, Brian Williams, Dan Rather, Barbara Walters, Charles Gibson, Matt Lauer, Tom Brokaw, Morley Safer and Meredith Vieira. Comedians-actors Anne Meara and Jerry Stiller were also in attendance.

But there was also room for members of the public to pay their respects.

James Huntsburg and his wife, Sylvia, visiting from Canada, had heard about the funeral. Admitted to the sanctuary, they took their place in one of the pews.

Huntsburg said he grew up watching Cronkite, who, he said, "touched me."

When he heard of Cronkite's death last Friday at 92, Huntsburg and his wife hadn't yet left from their home near Toronto for their Manhattan vacation.



People watch from the steps as pallbearers carry the casket of CBS newsmen Walter Cronkite at his funeral at St. Bartholomew's Church Thursday, July 23, 2009 in New York.

Associated Press

"I feel blessed to be here," said Huntsburg, visibly moved.

Sanford Socolow shared anecdotes from his many years working with Cronkite as a producer.

"Once," Socolow recalled, "he had this bizarre idea that he would ad-lib the newscast without a script." As Cronkite's cue for the control room to roll each film clip, he would gently brush his nose with his hand.

"It was utter chaos," said Socolow. "It lasted for two days."

But repeatedly during the ceremony, Cronkite's passion for sailing his beloved boat, the Wyntje, was celebrated.

Ashford offered vivid memories of their sailing adventures.

"Walter, hunched over the helm, would catch my eye, grin, and over the racket of the wind, holler, 'Sen-sational!'" □



Brazil's federal police officers carry drugs seized during anti-drug operations, in Rio de Janeiro, Friday, June 26, 2009. According to federal police some 3 tons of drugs, including marijuana, cocaine, and crack were burned during the "National Anti-Drug Week".

Associated Press

Brazil: Rio police find drug gang 'clinics'

BRADLEY BROOKS

Associated Press Writer

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Rio drug traffickers are operating makeshift medical clinics in the slums they control so wounded gang members don't have to risk arrest by seeking treatment at hospitals, police said Thursday. "It's the first time we've found clinics like this," a civil police spokesman said Thursday. "We can't say how long they've been used — we assume for some time." He spoke on condition of anonymity, per department rules.

Officers discovered the first clinic Wednesday in the Manguinhos slum in northern Rio. Inside a two-room shack, police found surgical scissors stained with blood; morphine, anesthesia, antibiotics and other medicines; medical equipment such as IVs and X-rays. Police found bandages with fresh blood on them and surmised that a gunman wounded in a shootout with officers sought treatment at the clinic just minutes before it was discovered.

Police then went looking for other rudimentary facilities — and quickly located one in the nearby Jacarezinho slum, stocked with similar medical

supplies.

Police chief Allan Turnowski said an unspecified number of doctors and nurses who worked in the clinics have since been arrested.

“They were making a lot of money” by treating drug gang members, Turnowski said.

Rio's sprawling slums are the site of frequent, bloody shootouts between police and the gangs that dominate the neighborhoods — with innocents often caught in the crossfire. A United Nations report last year found that police kill an average of three people a day in the city. Police killed one suspect during Thursday's operations in Jacarezinho and another suspect in Manguinhos.

Wounded drug traffickers know that if they seek treatment in a regular hospital, they risk being handed over to authorities, Turnowski added. “So they’ve made the investment of setting up these facilities where they can get proper treatment inside of their slum and avoid arrest.”

Police have previously arrested doctors who traveled into the slums to treat drug gang leaders, the spokesman said. □




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SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF JULY 23 - JULY

*matinee: everyday | late show: friday and saturday

AT RENAISSANCE - ORANJESTAD

PG-13 **HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE** 
daily: 5:10 8:15
matinee: 2:00 late show: 11:30

R THE HANGOVER
 daily: 5:35 7:45 9:50
 matinee: 1:15 3:25 late show: 12:00

PG-13	TRANSFORMER 2			
daily:	6:00	9:00		
matinee:	12:00	2:55	late show:	11:50

PG-13 I LOVE YOU BETH COOPER
daily: 4:20 6:30 8:45
matinee: 12:00 2:10 late show: 11:10

PG-13 YEAR ONE				
daily:	5:00	7:10	9:15	
matinee:	12:40	2:45	late show:	11:20


PG-13 **TERMINATOR SALVATION**
daily: 8:15
matinee: late show: 11:00


PG ICE AGE 3 DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS

daily:	4:15	6:15	
matinee:	12:20	2:20	late show:



AT PASEO HERENCIA

PG HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE  **NEW**
 daily: 5:00 8:15
 matinee: 1:30 late show: 11:20

R THE UGLY TRUTH 
 daily: 4:30 6:40 8:45
 matinee: 12:15 2:25 late show: 11:00

PG-13 THE PROPOSAL
daily: 10:00
matinee: late show: 12:20

PG-13 I LOVE YOU BETH COOPER
daily: 4:40 6:50
matinee: 12:25 2:35 late show:

R THE HANGOVER				
daily:	5:30	7:40	9:50	
matinee:	1:15	3:25	late show:	12:00

PG ICE AGE 3 DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS

daily:	4:00	6:00	8:00
matinee:	12:00	2:00	late show:



PG-13	TRANSFORMER 2			
daily:	5:40	8:30		
matinee:	12:05	2:50	late show:	11:25

PG-13 **PUBLIC ENEMIES**
daily: 10:00
matinee: late show: 11:50

Vice President Biden brings tough love to Georgia

DOUGLAS BIRCH

Associated Press Writer

TBILISI, Georgia (AP) — A year after Georgia's disastrous war with Russia, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden assured the small country on Thursday that the United States stands behind it in their continuing conflicts with their region's dominant power. But his message was tempered by tough love.

While saying Russia should withdraw its forces from two separatist Georgian regions, Biden also said Georgia should abandon any hopes of reclaiming those regions by force.

Further, he assured that the United States would stand behind Georgia's sovereignty, but Georgia must still strive to build a democratic society, six years after its peaceful Rose Revolution ousted a Soviet-era leader and brought President Mikhail Saakashvili to power. "Your Rose Revolution will only be complete when government is transparent, accountable and fully participatory, when issues are debated inside this chamber, not only out on the streets," Biden told federal and local officials from across the former Soviet republic.

Georgia's opposition has held street protests since April to call for Saakashvili to step down, saying he has grown increasingly authoritarian.

Few nations are more pro-American than Georgia, and

the audience listened in rapt silence for most of the speech delivered in the ornate chamber of the country's parliament building.

But Biden won several standing ovations when he criticized Russia's actions during and after its August 2008 war with Georgia. He pledged that the Obama administration would not abandon Georgia even as it sought to mend relations with Moscow, badly damaged by the Russian-Georgian war.

"I come here on behalf of the United States with a simple, straightforward message: We, the United States, stand by you on your journey to a secure, free and democratic, and once again united, Georgia," Biden said, bringing the audience to its feet.

After the outbreak of fighting in the separatist-held territory of South Ossetia, Russia sent tanks, troops and warplanes deep into Georgia in August. Moscow later recognized the independence claims of both South Ossetia and Abkhazia, a separatist-held territory on the Black Sea. Only Nicaragua has followed suit.

Biden told the crowd that Georgia's best hope for reclaiming its lost territories wasn't military action — it was building a free, prosperous society that those territories would want to join.

"It's a sad certainty but it is true, there is no military option

to reintegration," he said.

Saakashvili welcomed Biden's visit, saying it demonstrated the strong bonds between the two nations.

Biden also met with opposition leaders, who later praised the message he brought and his support for Georgia's sovereignty.

Irakly Alasania, a Saakashvili critic and former Georgian ambassador to the United Nations, lauded Biden's call for political and social reforms.

Biden told opposition leaders the U.S. stood behind the country, not Saakashvili individually, and "that the choice of president and a government is a matter for the Georgian people and not for any other state," said Nino Burdzhaneladze, a former speaker of parliament.

Biden delivered the speech near the end of his two-day visit to Tbilisi, during which he and Saakashvili have discussed economic aid and a proposal for \$16 million next year for military training and reorganization, officials on both sides said.

Biden's national security adviser Tony Blinken and a senior Georgian adviser denied that Saakashvili had asked Biden for anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons and U.S. participation in an EU observer mission along its border with the disputed regions. The U.S. official who had told that to reporters earlier Thursday said



Visiting U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, left, and Georgia's President Mikhail Saakashvili review honour guard outside a presidential palace in Tbilisi, Thursday, July 23, 2009. Biden arrived Wednesday in the former Soviet republic a year after its war with Russia.

Associated Press

later he had spoken in error.

Saakashvili has previously expressed a strong interest in acquiring U.S. weapons as he seeks to rebuild his military after the war, and Georgian officials in recent days have said they wanted the U.S. to join the observer mission. But Blinken said the Georgians have not formally requested heavy weapons, and that the EU has not invited U.S. participation in the mission. Blinken did not rule out the U.S. providing either after a formal request.

In Moscow, the government said it would not stand by

while Georgia was resupplied with weapons.

"We will continue inhibiting rearmament of the Saakashvili regime," Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin said, according to the ITAR-Tass news agency.

Georgia is one of the world's biggest recipients of U.S. foreign aid, receiving about \$1 billion from Washington over the past year — most toward reconstruction and humanitarian relief.

Saakashvili said he remarked to Biden during a meal: "I told you there was no such thing as a free dinner in Georgia." □



U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton arrives for a group photo as foreign ministers and representatives from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations smile during the ASEAN Regional Forum in Phuket, Thailand, Thursday, July 23, 2009. They are from left in front row; China's Yang Jiechi, Cambodia's Hor Namhong, Brunei's Prince Mohamed Bolkiah and Bangladesh's Dipu Moni. From left in back row are European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solano, India's Somanahalli Malliah Krishna, Indonesia's Hassan Wirajuda, Japan's Hirofumi Nakasone and Laos' Thongloun Sisoulith.

Associated Press

CLINTON/NKOREA

Continued from Page B1

Clinton said the world has made it clear to Pyongyang that it has "no place to go," citing near unanimity among Asian nations, including China, on fully enforcing the latest U.N. sanctions against Pyongyang for its repeated nuclear and missile tests.

Warning the North's nuclear ambitions could spark an arms race in the region, Clinton said the U.S. would continue to vigorously enforce tough U.N. sanctions and insist that the north "irreversibly denuclearize."

But she held out the prospect of restoring U.S. diplomatic ties and other incentives — actions the Obama administration would be willing to consider if the North Koreans dismantle their nuclear program.

"We urge North Korea to return to the six-party talks, look beyond the past and join others in finding the way forward," said Thai Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya, who hosted the ASEAN Regional Forum, a security conference among 27 countries and organizations that ended Thursday.

Clinton, who trumpeted Washington's renewed involvement in Asia during the conference, departed the resort island for Washington, wrapping up a weeklong trip to India and Thailand.

"North Korea's continued pursuit of its nuclear ambitions is sure to elevate tensions on the Korean peninsula and could provoke an arms race in the region," Clinton told a news conference before her departure.

Just moments before she spoke, a spokesman for the North Korean delegation said his government would not return to talks with the U.S., Japan, South Korea, China and Russia, citing the "deep-rooted anti-North Korean policy" of the United States.

"The six-party talks are over," Ri Hung Sik said, calling any proposed U.S. incentives "nonsense."

North Korea's Foreign Ministry, reacting to an earlier Clinton comment likening the regime to "small children" demanding attention, described her Thursday as "a funny lady" who sometimes "looks like a primary schoolgirl and sometimes a pensioner going shopping." □

Deposed Honduran leader prepares risky return



Ousted Honduras' President Manuel Zelaya answers questions during a news conference in Managua, Wednesday, July 22, 2009. Talks on resolving the Honduran political crisis headed toward failure Wednesday when the interim government indicated it would reject a mediator's final proposal for returning ousted President Zelaya to power.

Associated Press

MORGAN LEE

Associated Press Writer

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (AP) — Honduras' deposed president headed toward his nation's border Thursday to prepare a risky return home, an attempt to reverse an ouster that is testing the vitality of democracy in Latin America. The interim government that sent Manuel Zelaya

into exile vows to arrest the president if he sets foot in Honduras. Zelaya said he would make a second attempt to return home Saturday, saying U.S.-backed attempts at mediation had broken down.

Accompanied by Venezuelan Foreign Minister Nicolas Maduro, Zelaya drove a white jeep out

of the Honduran Embassy in Nicaragua, heading toward the northern town of Esteli, where he said he would spend Friday preparing for his return. Honduran Embassy officials broke into applause and chants of "Long live Mel!" using his nickname.

Zelaya said he hoped soldiers at the border would stand down when they see him. He called on supporters to meet him at the border, although he has not yet said exactly where he plan to cross into Honduras.

"I think the guns will be lowered when they see their people and their president," Zelaya said at a news conference shortly before leaving.

All governments in the Western Hemisphere have condemned the coup, in which soldiers acting on orders from Congress and the Supreme Court arrested Zelaya and flew him into exile. Nations on both sides of the political spectrum say Zelaya's return to power is crucial to the region's stability.

Latin America expert Vicki Gass said that if Zelaya's opponents succeed in driving him from power, it could have a ripple effect in a region where left-leaning elected governments are challenging small classes of elites that have ruled many countries for decades.

"Coups could then happen in Peru, where President (Alan) Garcia has a very low approval rating, or in Argentina or in Guatemala," said Gass, an analyst at the Washington Office on Latin America which promotes human rights and democracy. "Constitutional order and rule of law have to be restored."

Zelaya said the mediation efforts, led by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, had failed after representatives of the interim government flatly rejected the possibility

that he might return to the presidency. They say they cannot overturn a Supreme Court ruling forbidding Zelaya's reinstatement.

But Jose Miguel Insulza, secretary-general of the Organization of American States, held out hope that the two sides might still reach a settlement — and called Zelaya's attempt to return without an agreement "hasty."

"He has always wanted to return to his country, but it's important to make an effort to avoid a likely confrontation," Insulza said.

He said that neither delegation had officially responded to Arias proposal, which calls for Zelaya's reinstatement, amnesty for the coup leaders and early elections.

The United States warned of tough sanctions against Honduras if Zelaya is not reinstated, but also said Thursday it does not support Zelaya's plan to return on his own.

"Any step that would add to the risk of violence in Honduras or in the area, we think would be unwise," State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said in Washington.

Zelaya dismissed the concerns of Insulza and the U.S., saying "defending our rights is not an act of violence ... we are going to seek dialogue."

In Honduras, Zelaya supporters turned up the pressure, blocking roads throughout the country Thursday and occupying several government buildings in peaceful protests.

It was unclear exactly when or how Zelaya planned to enter the country. Zelaya has set and let pass a series of deadlines for his return, and spokesman Allan Fajardo said Thursday that Zelaya could travel by air, sea, or land from any of

Honduras' three neighboring countries.

Fajardo told The Associated Press that Zelaya would set up base Thursday in the Nicaraguan city of Esteli, near the Honduran border, and then figure out his next move. He said Zelaya would be accompanied by family, supporters and journalists. The Honduran military thwarted Zelaya's first attempt to return home July 5 by blocking the runway at the airport in the capital, Tegucigalpa. The flight sparked clashes between Zelaya's supporters and security forces in which at least one protester was killed.

Lorena Calix, a spokeswoman for Honduras' national police, said Thursday that officers were ready to detain Zelaya if he makes another attempt to come home.

"When he comes to Honduras, we have to execute the arrest warrant," she said. Honduras' Supreme Court ordered Zelaya's arrest before the June 28 coup, ruling his effort to hold a referendum on whether to form a constitutional assembly was illegal. The military decided to send Zelaya into exile instead — a move that military lawyers themselves have called illegal but necessary. Zelaya's opponents, who objected to his populist and socialist policies, have argued the president was trying to change the constitution to extend his term. Zelaya denies that. If he is arrested, Zelaya faces four charges of violating governmental order, treason and abusing and usurping power that could bring 43 years behind bars. Prosecutors say they are investigating a raft of other allegations ranging from misappropriation of public funds to drug smuggling — accusations Zelaya says are purely political. □

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Ahanta tribal chief Nana Etsin Kofi II, center, signs a document as Dutch Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen, second from right, looks on, during a ceremony at the Dutch Foreign Ministry in The Hague, Netherlands, Thursday, July 23, 2009.

Associated Press

Dutch return severed head of Ghana chief

MIKE CORDER

Associated Press Writer

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — The descendants of an African chief who was hanged and decapitated by a Dutch general 171 years ago reluctantly accepted the return of his severed head Thursday, still angry even as the Dutch tried to right a historic wrong.

The head of King Badu Bonsu II was discovered last year in a jar of formaldehyde gathering dust in the anatomical collection of the Leiden University Medical Center. The Dutch government agreed to Ghanaian demands that the relic be returned.

On Thursday, members of the king's Ahanta tribe, dressed in dark robes and wearing red sashes, took part in the hand-over ceremony, honoring his spirit by toasting with Dutch gin and then sprinkling the drink over the floor at the Dutch Foreign Ministry.

But descendants of the chief said they were not consoled.

"I am hurt, angry. My grandfather has been killed," said Joseph Jones Amoah, the great, great grandson of the chief.

The chief's head was stored elsewhere at the ministry and was not displayed during the ceremony. It is expected to be flown with the tribe members back to Ghana on Friday.

Tribal elders said after the hand-over that they were also angry because they had been sent by their current chief only to identify the head, not retrieve it. Taking it back without first reporting to the chief would be a breach of protocol, they said.

"We, the Ahanta, are not happy at all," said Nana Etsin Kofi II. The head was taken by Maj. Gen. Jan Verveer in 1838 in retaliation for Bonsu's killing of two Dutch emissaries, whose heads were displayed as trophies on Bonsu's throne, said Arthur Japin, a Dutch author who discovered the king's head when he was working on a historical novel.

The elders demanded the Dutch government provide aid to their tribe to appease the slain chief.

Nana Kwekwe Darko III, who tipped the gin on the floor in a Ghanaian tradition of respect for the dead, dabbed tears from his eyes afterward and said he wanted the Dutch to build schools and hospitals for his people.

Ministry spokesman Bart Rijs said that 10 tribal chiefs who came from Ghana had agreed before the ceremony to take the head home. The official transfer was between the two countries' governments, he said.

Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen used the ceremony to apologize for Dutch involvement in the slave trade. Ghana, then known as Gold Coast, was a base for Dutch slave traders.

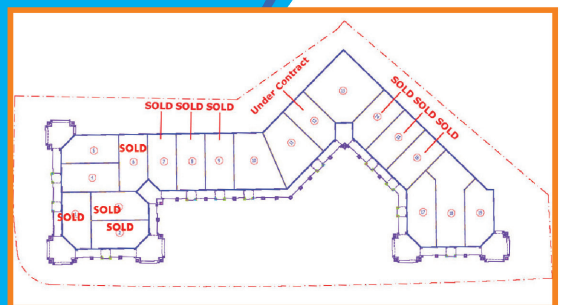
"We are also here because of our mutual desire to lay to rest episodes in ... history that were unfortunate and shameful," Verhagen said. □

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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Contador wins Tour's 18th stage

JAMEY KEATEN

Associated Press Writer

ANNECY, France (AP) — Alberto Contador won the final time trial in the Tour de France on Thursday, and Lance Armstrong moved up one spot to third place overall.

Contador now looks all but assured of his second Tour victory after increasing his overall lead in the 18th stage, in which riders embarked one-by-one down the start ramp for the 40.5-kilometer (25.2-mile) stage in and around Annecy.

The 2007 champion finished the stage in 48 minutes, 31 seconds — beating Fabian Cancellara of Switzerland by 3 seconds. Russia's Mikhail Ignatiev was third, 15 seconds back.

"I went all out," said Contador, adding that his earpiece radio linking him with Astana team managers stopped working during the stage, and that he was worried about Cancellara's skill at time trials.

"Of course, what I especially wanted was to think about general class. A stage victory was less important," he said. "I'm very happy. I didn't expect it."

Continued on Page B12

AL Roundup

Perfection: Sox' Buehrle pitches perfect game



Texas Rangers starting pitcher Dustin Nippert delivers to the Boston Red Sox during the first inning of a baseball game in Arlington, Texas, Wednesday, July 22, 2009.

Associated Press

ANDREW SELIGMAN

AP Sports Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — Mark Buehrle pitched the first perfect game in the major leagues in five years in leading the Chicago White Sox over the Tampa Bay Rays 5-0 on Thursday.

Buehrle (11-3) got a great catch from center fielder DeWayne Wise leading off the ninth inning to save

the bid — and the shutout. Wise entered at the start of the inning as a defensive replacement and when Gabe Kapler led off with a drive to deep left-center, Wise sprinted, jumped and got his glove above the fence to rob Kapler of a home run.

The ball almost came out when Wise bounced off the fence, stumbled, fell to the ground and rolled. But he

stood, proudly displaying the ball for the crowd in his bare left hand.

"I was hoping it was staying in there, give him enough room to catch it. I know the guys were doing everything they could to save the no-hitter, the perfect game, whatever it might be," Buehrle said.

Michel Hernandez then struck out, and with the 28,036 fans chanting Buehrle's name, Jason Bartlett grounded to shortstop, and Buehrle was mobbed by teammates.

"I don't know if it's really sunk in yet. We have a short flight to Detroit. I'm sure it will be a little hectic later," said Buehrle.

The pitcher had already received a congratulatory telephone call from President Barack Obama — a White Sox fan — following the 16th perfect game in MLB history since the modern era began in 1900 and the first since Arizona's Randy

Johnson against Atlanta on May 18, 2004.

White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said Obama told Buehrle: "It was an unbelievable achievement, something that everyone will always remember."

Buehrle (11-3), backed by Josh Fields' second-inning grand slam, threw 76 of 116 pitches for strikes and struck out six in his second career no-hitter.

"I bought everyone watches after the last one. That was an expensive no-hitter," he said. "This one will probably be more expensive."

The 30-year-old left-hander became only the second pitcher to throw two no-hitters for the White Sox: Frank Smith did it against Detroit in 1905 and the Philadelphia Athletics in 1908. The only previous perfect game for the White Sox was by Charles Robertson at Detroit on April 30, 1922. □



Alberto Contador of Spain, wearing the overall leader's yellow jersey, crosses the finish line to win the 18th stage of the Tour de France cycling race, an individual time-trial of 25.2 miles with start and finish in Annecy, Alps region, France, Thursday July 23, 2009.

Associated Press



This Jan. 24, 2007 file photo shows Belgium's Kim Clijsters in action during her quarterfinal match against Switzerland's Martina Hingis at the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne. The 2005 U.S. Open champion is coming out of retirement this summer.

Associated Press

Williams sisters, Clijsters lead U.S. Open field

WHITE PLAINS, New York (AP) — Defending champion Serena Williams and four other past winners, including her sister Venus and wild card Kim Clijsters, are in the provisional women's field for the U.S. Open.

Ninety-nine of the top 100 women in the WTA rankings received direct entry on Thursday into the hard-court Grand Slam tournament, played from Aug. 31 to Sept. 13 in New York. The one missing is No. 88 Nathalie Dechy of France, who announced her retirement this week.

Serena Williams will be bidding for her fourth U.S. Open championship and third major title of 2009, after those at the Australian Open in January and Wimbledon this month. She owns 11 Grand Slam singles titles, the most among active players.

Clijsters will be playing at Flushing Meadows for the first time since winning her only major title at the 2005 U.S. Open. She is making a comeback after retiring in 2007. □

NL Roundup

Manny gets pinch-hit grand slam for Dodgers

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Manny Ramirez hit a tie-breaking, pinch-hit grand slam Wednesday to send Los Angeles to a 6-2 victory over Cincinnati, their 12th consecutive at home against the Reds.

Ramirez was kept out of the starting lineup for precautionary reasons with a sore left hand after being hit by a pitch a night earlier.

He sent the first pitch from reliever Nick Masset into the "Mannywood" section of lower left field seats for his 21st career grand slam, giving Los Angeles a 6-2 lead in the sixth inning and putting the crowd into a frenzy.

It was his 11th homer of the season and his first career pinch-hit homer.

It was Ramirez's first homer into the "Mannywood" section, which was resurrected after his 50-game suspension for violating baseball's drug rules ended on July 3.

Ramirez pinch-hit for Chad Billingsley (9-6), who allowed two runs and seven hits in six innings, struck out seven and walked one.

Braves 4, Giants 2

At Atlanta, Jair Jurrjens gave up three hits in 7 2-3 innings and Yunel Escobar hit a three-run homer as surging Atlanta downed San Francisco.

Escobar's third-inning homer gave the Braves a 4-0 lead over Tim Lincecum, who lost for the first time in five weeks.

The Braves are 6-1 since the All-Star break and 10-3 in their last 13 games overall. Jurrjens (9-7) earned his third straight win and set a season high with nine strikeouts while allowing one run.

The Giants are 1-5 on their 10-game trip, including three straight losses to the Braves. Overall, they have lost six of seven.

Lincecum (10-3), the NL's All-Star starter, lost for the first time since June 17 and for the first time in six career starts against the Braves.

Astros 4, Cardinals 3

At Houston, Miguel Tejada singled in the winning run

with two outs in the ninth inning to help Houston complete a three-game sweep of St. Louis.

Tailing 3-2 entering the ninth, Ivan Rodriguez led off with a single against Cardinals closer Ryan Franklin and scored when Chris Coste, subbing for the injured Lance Berkman, doubled to center.

The win pulled the Astros within a game of the Central-leading Cardinals after trailing by six games a month ago.

The runs were the first allowed Franklin (2-1) in 18 innings. He gave up four hits.

Houston closer Jose Valverde (1-2) pitched a scoreless ninth for the win.

Yadier Molina's RBI single in the seventh broke a 1-all tie and Brendan Ryan's sacrifice fly made it 3-1.

Kaz Matsui's bases-loaded single in the seventh pulled Houston to 3-2.

Cubs 10, Phillies 5

At Philadelphia, Aramis Ramirez and Jeff Baker each had a two-run double as Chicago beat Philadelphia



Los Angeles Dodgers' Manny Ramirez, right, is greeted at the plate after hitting a grand slam against the Cincinnati Reds during the sixth inning of a baseball game in Los Angeles, Wednesday, July 22, 2009.

to snap the Phillies' 10-game winning streak.

Carlos Zambrano (7-4) won his third straight start for the Cubs to end the Phillies' longest winning streak in 18 years.

Coming off his strongest outing of the season, 46-year-old Jamie Moyer (9-7) was

tagged for five runs in five innings as his ERA jumped to 5.65.

Marlins 5, Padres 0

At San Diego, Ricky Nolasco struck out 10 and combined with three relievers on a three-hitter, leading Florida to a victory that completed a three-game sweep.

In other games NL it was, Pittsburgh 8, Milwaukee 7; Chicago Cubs 10, Philadelphia 5; Colorado 4, Arizona 3; Florida 5, San Diego 0; Washington 3, N.Y. Mets 1; Atlanta 4, San Francisco 2; Houston 4, St. Louis 3; and L.A. Dodgers 6, Cincinnati 2. □

Associated Press

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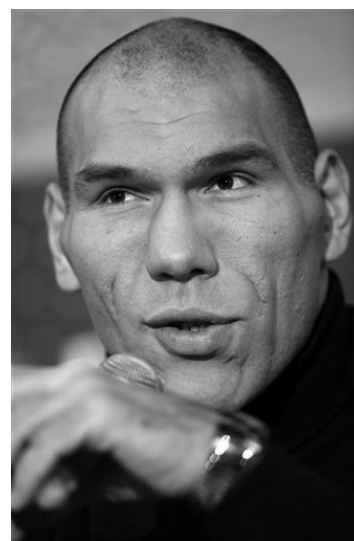
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This is a Thursday, April 16, 2009 file photo of British heavyweight boxer David Haye as he talks at a press conference at the Veltins-Arena in Gelsenkirchen, Germany; and this is a Saturday, Dec. 20, 2008, file photo of Russian Heavyweight Champion Nikolai Valuev as he speaks during a press conference in Zurich, Switzerland.

Valuev to fight Haye for WBC belt on Nov. 7

we had to look for a different opponent. We are happy to present an up-and-coming challenger such as David Haye. I am sure it will be an exciting fight.”

Haye became available after his challenge to Vitali’s brother, Wladimir, was called off last month because he injured his back in training. Haye is still a novice at heavyweight, having fought only twice at that level, and will be nine inches shorter and probably up to 100 pounds lighter than Valuev, the tallest

and heaviest world champion in boxing history.

The 36-year-old Valuev has won a 50-1 record, while the 28-year-old Haye is 23-1.

“I feel I have what it takes to beat him,” said Haye, who showed he had speed and a powerful right hand at cruiserweight.

“I feel I’m a lot faster than he is. It’s a tall order, but I feel that I can bring the title back to Britain.

“I saw the guy actually fight when I was 16 years old at Battersea Town Hall (in

London). When he came out of the ring, I went up next to him and I couldn’t believe human beings got that big. And now I am fighting him. I have got to get inside him and outmaneuver him. Big heavyweights punch a lot harder but they punch a lot slower, so I can see everything that’s coming.”

Vitali Klitschko’s manager, Bernd Boente, said Thursday that Haye had turned down an offer to fight his client in September in Frankfurt so he can instead take on Valuev. □

Associated Press

ROBERT MILLWARD

AP Sports Writer

LONDON (AP) — Tired of waiting for Vitali Klitschko, Nikolai Valuev will defend his WBA heavyweight title against David Haye in November.

The fight is likely to be in Germany on Nov. 7 with Haye, the brash former cruiserweight world champion now trying to make his name as a heavyweight, saying he will be the first fighter to knock out the 7-foot Russian. “It is not the first time that my opponents have said things like that,” Valuev said Thursday. “Haye is a young man with a big mouth. Let

him talk. It will be different in the ring. He will certainly not get my belt.”

Valuev’s German-based backers said they had been trying to set up a unification bout with Klitschko, the WBC champion.

“I know that a lot of boxing fans really wanted to see Valuev fighting Vitali,” said Valuev’s manager, Wilfried Sauerland. “We wanted to make this fight happen. It was our top priority and I had really good talks with Vitali.

“But all of a sudden, I did not hear back. I could not get in touch with his management anymore. We were under time pressure and at some point



American seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong takes the start of the 18th stage of the Tour de France cycling race, an individual time-trial of 25.2 miles with start and finish in Annecy, Alps region, France, Thursday July 23, 2009.

Associated Press

Armstrong was 16th, 1:30 behind. But he easily overcame a 30-second deficit to Frank Schleck, who began the day in third place but slipped to sixth overall after finishing 2:34 behind Contador.

After the stage, Armstrong said he had “mixed emotions. Sixteenth in a time trial is not a good result, but my ambition is to get on the podium, so I have to be happy with that.”

Schleck and his younger brother Andy had bumped Armstrong from second place to fourth a day earlier in the last punishing Alpine stage.

“I suffered,” Armstrong said of the time trial. “I probably started too hard and maybe I was just empty from yesterday and those cramps I suffered at the end of the (17th) stage.”

Overall, Contador leads Andy Schleck by 4:11, Armstrong is 5:25 back and Britain’s Bradley Wiggins is fourth, 5:36 behind. Germany’s Andreas

Kloeden, an Astana teammate of Contador and Armstrong, is fifth, 5:38 back. Frank Schleck is sixth, 5:59 behind.

While the stage was mostly flat, riders had to contend with the midlevel Bluffy pass climb, which snaked upward for 2.3 miles with magnificent vistas over the hill-ringed lake.

Several riders, including British time-trial specialist David Millar, said the course layout favored climbers because of that ascent.

“I felt like I had stopped dead in my tracks,” on the climb, Millar said.

The race against the clock started under cloudy skies. The sun eventually broke through, but rain doused the course by late afternoon and left patches of water on the roads.

Armstrong was relatively strong at the start, only 29 seconds slower than Contador through the second intermediate time check at the

18TH STAGE

Continued from Page B10

25-kilometer mark. His main time deficit came on Bluffy — which peaked at 28.5 kilometers. There, he was 1:12 behind Contador.

“I felt good at the beginning, I felt smooth, but there was a tail wind, so maybe everyone felt good,” Armstrong said. “I just wasn’t that strong on the climb.” After the stage, the 37-year-old Texan announced that he and U.S. electronics vendor Radio Shack are forming a new cycling team that will compete in next year’s Tour.

Armstrong came out of retirement this season to ride for the Kazakh-funded squad headed by his longtime mentor Johan Bruyneel, who led him to his seven straight Tour wins.

After four straight tough stages, riders get a relatively easier ride Friday with a 110.6-mile course from Bourgoin-Jallieu to Aubenas.

The biggest remaining race challenge is an uphill finish at Mont Ventoux on Saturday — which Armstrong calls the toughest ascent in France — a day before the race ends on the Champs-Elysees in Paris. The threat for Armstrong is again likely to be the Schleck brothers, who have matched the Americans on the climbs this year.

“I want to protect my position with Andy climbing so well,” Armstrong said, “(I) just gotta watch for the moves and don’t let him get away.” □

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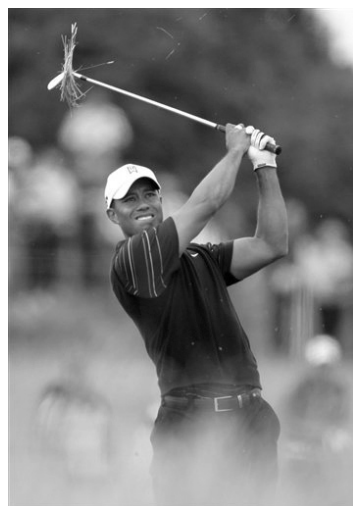
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Tiger to play in Buick Open



Tiger Woods of the US plays out of the rough on the 13th hole during the opening round of the British Open Golf championship, at the Turnberry golf course, Scotland, Thursday, July 16, 2009.

Associated Press

GRAND BLANC, Michigan (AP) — Tiger Woods has decided to play in the Buick

Open as he prepares for the final major of the year.

Woods announced Thursday that he would return to the Buick Open, which he has won twice.

His longtime endorsement deal with Buick ended early last year, and there were questions whether Woods would play.

Woods did not play the Buick Invitational at Torrey Pines earlier this year because he had not returned from knee surgery.

The decision means Woods is likely to play three straight weeks concluding with the PGA Championship. Between the Buick Open and the PGA Championship is the Bridgestone Invitational at Firestone, a World Golf Championship that Woods has won six times. □

Sliver Stars drub Fever 84-65

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Sophia Young scored 22 of her 24 points in the first half to help revive the struggling San Antonio Silver Stars in a 84-65 drubbing of the Indiana Fever in the WNBA on Thursday.

The Silver Stars, who had lost three of their last four, also stepped up defensively, holding leading All-Star vote-getter Tamika Catchings scoreless on 0-for-9 shooting.

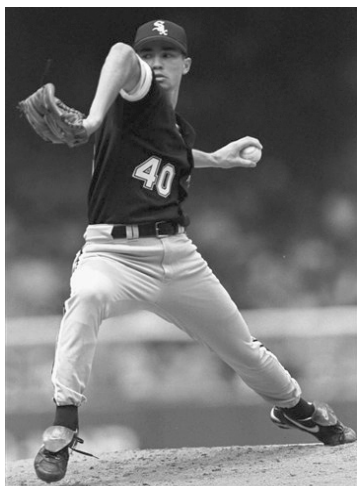
Young, a Western Conference reserve for this weekend's All-Star game, played only seven minutes after halftime. Catchings played only three as the Silver Stars pushed the lead to as much as 30 points in the first half.

The Fever cut the margin to 13 with reserves from both teams playing in the second half. □

Former White Sox pitcher admits HGH use

CHICAGO (AP) — Former pitcher Jim Parque says he used human growth hormone "about six times" after he was cut by the Chicago White Sox in 2002 and before he tried a comeback with the Tampa Bay Rays the following season.

Parque made his confession in a lengthy, first-person account published on Thursday in the Chicago Sun-Times. He says he tried HGH in a bid to recover from a shoulder injury that he blames for derailing his career. "It never gave me more strength or bulked me up, but it provided quicker recoveries," Parque wrote. "I began to throw harder because my shoulder felt no pain. I was able to withstand more throwing, creating a work environment that I had not experienced in two years."



In this May 31, 1998, file photo, Chicago White Sox starting pitcher Jim Parque delivers against the Detroit Tigers during the first inning of a baseball game in Detroit.

Parque made five starts for Tampa Bay in 2003, compiling an 11.94 ERA. He never pitched again in Major League Baseball. In 2007, he was named as a drug user in the Mitchell Report. □

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ORANJESTAD

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Botica na warda

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Botica Maria

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Oranjestad	582-4000
Noord	587-0009
Sta. Cruz	585-4710
Savaneta	584-7000
San Nicolas	584-5000

Emergency Numbers



Emergencia	911
Polis	100
Brandweer	115
Brandweer II	582-1108
Tipline di Polis	11141
Hospital	587-4300

Oranjestad

Ambulance	582-1234
Warda Polis	582-4000
BGD Oranjestad	582-8877

San Nicolas

Ambulance	584-5050
Warda Polis	584-5000
BGD San Nicolas	584-1606
Valero Security	584-1720

Services

Elmar	583-3000
Informacion	118
Kadaster	582-1311
Serlimar	584-6456
Setar	582-5151
Taxi	582-2116
Web	585-4600
Voogdijraad	582-1262
Taxi- Tas	587-5900
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Aruba (FADA) Tel: 583-2999

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Narcotics Anonymous

Tel: 583-8989

Fundacion Amor pa
Prohimo

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Fundacion Hende Muher
den dificultad

Tel: 583-5400

Raúl Castro regresa a Cuba tras una gira de diez días por África



Correa pide a FARC que aclaren si aportaron dinero a su campaña en Ecuador

QUITO - El presidente de Ecuador, Rafael Correa, solicitó este jueves a la guerrilla de las FARC que aclare públicamente si aportó dinero a su primera campaña electoral, como mencionó un jefe rebelde en un video incautado en Colombia en medio de la elevada tensión entre los dos gobiernos.

“Le pido a las FARC, directamente, públicamente, que digan si el video es real o no, que digan si aportaron dinero a la campaña de Rafael Correa y a quién le aportaron”, afirmó al canal de televisión Uno.

El mandatario reelecto insistió en que nunca recibió financiamiento ilegal para su campaña en 2006, y mencionó la posibilidad de que las Fuerzas Armas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) hayan sido engañadas por falsos colaboradores de su movimiento Alianza País.

“Seguramente fueron estafadas porque la campaña de Rafael Correa no ha recibido (ni) 20 centavos”, dijo Correa, y agregó que entre las “miles de personas” que apoyaron su candidatura, “tal vez alguien se tomó el nombre” de Alianza País “y las FARC le dieron un dinero”.

En ese sentido, reiteró su llamado a la guerrilla a que identifique a esa persona, para que a su vez ésta “responda si tiene algo que ver con el gobierno”.

En el video que fue filtrado a la prensa por la Policía colombiana, aparece el jefe militar de las FARC, Jorge Briceño (alias ‘Mono Jojoy’), hablando de una “ayuda en dólares a la campaña de Correa” y “de contactos con sus emisarios”.

Según las autoridades colombianas, la grabación es auténtica y “descalifica completamente al gobierno” ecuatoriano, que por su parte tacha de montaje las supuestas pruebas.

El hecho agudizó la crisis que mantiene rotas las relaciones diplomáticas entre los dos gobiernos, desde que el Ejército colombiano bombardeó el 1 de marzo de 2008 un campamento clandestino de las FARC en Ecuador, ataque en el que murió, junto con otras 24 personas, el número dos de la guerrilla, Raúl Reyes. □

LA HABANA - El presidente cubano, general Raúl Castro, llegó en la madrugada de hoy a Cuba tras realizar una gira de diez días por Argelia, Egipto, Namibia y Angola, más una escala técnica en Brasil al volver, informaron medios oficiales.

El mandatario arribó a La Habana procedente de la ciudad brasileña de Salvador, donde recorrió algunos de sus puntos históricos acompañado por el gobernador del estado de Bahía, Jacques Wagner, durante una escala técnica de

cuatro horas.

La primera etapa de la gira por África comenzó el pasado día 12 en Argelia, país que visitó por segunda vez este año, y desde allí voló a Egipto, para entregar la presidencia del Movimiento de los No Alineados en el balneario turístico de Sharm el Sheij y visitar El Cairo y las pirámides.

El gobernante prosiguió su periplo por Namibia y finalmente por Angola, país al que ya viajó también a inicios de año.

Castro fue recibido hoy en el aeropuerto de La Habana por el primer vicepresidente cubano, José Ramón Machado Ventura, y el ministro del Interior, Abelardo Colomé Ibarra.

Se espera que el mandatario presida en la ciudad oriental de Holguín el próximo domingo el acto oficial central del “Día de la Rebelión Nacional”, que celebra el aniversario 56 de la primera acción armada de la revolución cubana liderada por su hermano y antecesor Fidel. □

Aclara Córdova que no hay rebrote de influenza A(H1N1)

MÉXICO - El secretario de Salud, José Ángel Córdova Villalobos, señaló que no hay rebrote de influenza A(H1N1) en el país, a pesar de que zona sureste.

Sin embargo, destacó que no se debe bajar la guardia en ningún estado y mantener las medidas de prevención, al tiempo de asegurar que la dependencia a su cargo apoya a todas las entidades por igual, “porque los programas son de todos”.

“Vamos a trabajar con todos los gobiernos de los estados, sin ninguna distinción. Donde haya más problemitas le vamos a echar más los kilos, porque los programas son de todos, no son de un estado, y nos incumbe a todos, por eso hemos estado interviniendo”, sostuvo. Entrevistado al término de la entrega de reconocimientos a alumnos destacados del programa “Sigamos Aprendiendo... en el Hospital”, el funcionario señaló que casos de influenza A(H1N1) van a seguir registrándose porque el virus adecuada separación social entre los contagiados.

“No creo que sea este el rebrote de diciembre, lo que pasa es que sí estamos teniendo brotes en varios estados de la República, lo más importante es en el sureste, pero hemos tenido algunos casos en el sur de Tamaulipas, incluso un fallecimiento en Colima, dos en Guanajuato; tenemos que estar atentos en todo el país, sin bajar la guardia”, dijo.

Por ello, agregó, se reforzarán las acciones de

prevención y detección temprana con cursos especiales de capacitación y comunicación, sobre todo para prevenir que en diciembre se dispare esta enfermedad y evitar fallecimientos, porque casos van a seguir habiendo.

En ese sentido, Córdova Villalobos subrayó que, como lo dijo “la Organización Mundial de la Salud, ya no es tan importante que estén contando los casos, lo importante es contar los casos graves, aquellos que se hospitalizan y las defunciones”.

Consideró que los casos del sureste pueden deberse a la complicada topología, porque ello impide llegar adecuadamente con la información de esta enfermedad a todas las comunidades.

Sin embargo, prácticamente más de la mitad de los estados cuentan con el examen de detección de la enfermedad, para que puedan hacer su diagnóstico de inmediato.

Asimismo, comentó que hasta el momento hay registrados 15 mil 383 casos de influenza A(H1N1) con 139 decesos, y que en el caso del tipo estacional, ya hay cinco mil 100 contagiados.

Agregó que a partir del 5 de octubre arrancará la campaña de vacunación contra la influenza estacional y en cuanto esté listo el reactivo del tipo A(H1N1) se hará lo mismo, dando prioridad a los sectores más desprotegidos y personal médico. □





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